

39 per cent increase in young missing out on education

# RISE IN CHILDREN WITHOUT A SCHOOL

REPORT BY JORDAN HARRIS

**THE number of children in Walsall missing out on an education has increased by some 39 per cent, latest figures show.**

A total of 111 children living in the borough were without a place at a school or an appropriate alternative site as of February – an increase from just 80 at the same time last year.

At present, there are 58 cases of children of a primary school age being without a place and 53 in the secondary school age bracket.

The figures include permanently excluded pupils, children who have moved into the borough and failed to secure a place, children returning from a period of custody and children whose parents or carers fail to apply for, or accept, the offer of a school place.

Councillor Rose Burley, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services and Education, said: "We are working hard to decrease the numbers of children missing education.

"Our aim as an authority is to ensure that every child is attending an appropriate educational placement as quickly as possible."

## Alarming

Last year it was revealed that 33 primary aged children and 47 secondary aged children were classed as missing education across the borough.

The increase has been described as alarming by Councillor Doug James, who is a governor at four schools in his area and believes there is a need for more schools to be built across the borough.

He said: "Last year I thought the figures were a real cause for concern and I am disappointed to learn that they have increased.

"I believe we are heading towards a crisis in our borough with the demand for school places outweighing what we can offer.

"At the same time, more houses are being built, meaning more families are coming into the area and that again puts more stress on our schools.

"At some point the figures had improved but I am disappointed to see that they have increased again. We need more schools and they need to be of the right standard."

The latest national school tables, released in January, showed that in the borough, 57.4 per cent of pupils are achieving A\* to C in both their English and Maths GCSEs.

At the same time, the borough was ranked 11th from bottom in a list of authorities ranked according to the proportion of secondary schools that were found to be underperforming.

## FUNDRAISING IS PLAIN AB-SEILING FOR JADE



Jade Secker in her impromptu abseil down the gallery

FORMER Miss Black Country Jade Secker stepped right out of her comfort zone to help raise more than £7,500 for charity – and dropped 110ft down the side of Walsall New Art Gallery.

Charity fundraising officer Jade was at the gallery to support the dozens of adrenaline junkies in a daring abseil to raise money for The Haven women's refuge in Wolverhampton and hadn't intended to take part.

But at the last minute she decided she too would take up the challenge.

The 26-year-old said: "It was such a last minute decision this was completely out of my comfort zone. But I thought it was about time I took on a challenge as I spend most of my days encouraging others to do them!



Alison Buckingham, of Wombourne, Emily Glew, of Cannock, and George Conlan

"The best part was being able to do it to raise money and awareness for such an amazing charity... oh, and getting my feet firmly back on the ground."

More than 30 people clambered down the town centre art gallery for the charity at the weekend. Among them, wearing a very appropriate Superman t-shirt, was 20-year-old Dudley man George Conlan.

He said: "It is the first time I have done it off the top of a building, I have done a bit of rock climbing.

"I am alright with heights. It is a bit daunting before you go over the edge but that is human nature. I quite enjoyed it really getting to shoot down a building."

Staff from Dolomite Training in the Peak

District were on hand to make sure all 34 people made it down the wall safe and more than £7,500 was raised.

However, as Jade did not have time to get sponsorship beforehand, anyone who would like to make a donation can go to <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/JadeHavenAbseil>

She said: "Those who know me will know how much of a wuss I am and how much it took for me to get myself down that building!"

"I would be so grateful of any donations and I know the charity will too! The Haven supports hundreds of women and children each year to escape abuse and rebuild their lives happily and safely. Without support from the community through events like this, they simply wouldn't be able to do this."

## CHARITY

### Pinball wizard officially a world record holder

A HOSPITAL worker who played pinball for more than 30 hours has been confirmed as a Guinness World Record holder.

Wayne Johns, who is a theatre equipment manager at Walsall Manor Hospital, completed the marathon attempt at the hospital between midday Saturday, October 23 and 6pm the following day.

In doing so the 43-year-old from Tamworth also raised £5,000 to raise money for prostate cancer charities in honour of his dad Bill who has undergone treatment for the disease.

Now Guinness has confirmed Mr Johns has surpassed the previous total of 27 hours.



Wayne Johns

## CRIME

### Car-key burglars target two homes

POLICE are urging residents to be vigilant following a spate of car thefts in Walsall.

Burglars targeted a home in Greaves Avenue before stealing two of the cars from the drive. They broke in through a door at the rear of the property.

Once inside they took the keys to the vehicles and drove off. The raid happened last Friday, between 3am and 8.10am.

A similar theft happened in Wood Lane, Streety, when two cars were also taken overnight Thursday.

Anyone with information about either can call police on 101.

## WINNER

### Gamestore player scoops £300,000

A MYSTERY Walsall woman has scooped £300,000 on the national lottery without even touching a ticket. The lucky lady, known only as 'Mrs S', bagged the top prize by playing instant win game 'Frosty Bingo' online at the lottery Gamestore on February 21.

Although her identity has not been revealed the National Lottery confirmed the first thing she has done with the six-figure sum is book a holiday to South Africa.

Lottery spokesman Andy Carter said: "Huge congratulations to Mrs S for winning this fantastic prize, after a few simple clicks she has become £300,000 better off."

## INSIDE

### IT'S ALE OKAY FOR BEER FESTIVAL



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# Hospice highlighting rare condition



Three-year-old Lincoln King

A CHARITY has been spreading the word about vital care it offers as part of Lymphoedema Awareness Week.

Lymphoedema is a long-term condition that causes swelling in the body's tissues and as part of the week St Giles Hospice has highlighted the patients at its lymphoedema clinic in Whittington, Lichfield.

Among the hospice's patients is three-year-old Lincoln King – who was only one when he started attending the clinic to receive specialist support.

Lincoln – who lives in Rugby, War-

wickshire, with his mum Keylie, dad Chris and sister Scarlett-Louise – was born with the rare condition known as primary lymphoedema, a painful swelling of the tissues which can lead to a loss of mobility.

His mum Keylie said: "We were told during a routine 20-week scan that our unborn baby had lymphoedema. At that point the doctors couldn't determine how debilitating it would be."

Lincoln was born on February 2, 2014 and showed signs of lymphoedema on both lower limbs including his feet,

which meant doctors were not sure whether he would ever walk or get to wear a pair of shoes.

However it would be several months before Keylie and Chris would know to what extent his condition would affect him and how much it would change their lives as parents.

When Lincoln turned one, after hearing about the facility through friends and family, Keylie and Chris took him to the lymphoedema clinic at St Giles Hospice. It was there that he began receiving life-changing care and support.

# Paramedic keeps job after patient death

A PARAMEDIC who stood with his hands in his pockets as a patient died in front of him at a Black Country hospital was told he can remain in the profession.

Matt Geary, 37, from Great Wyrley, looked on from the window of his ambulance as Carl Cope, 47, collapsed and fought for his life outside the entrance of Walsall Manor Hospital. Geary stood over the man for several minutes as a long-standing heart condition claimed his life before handing him over to nurses on June 23 in 2012.



Matt Geary

The paramedic was later seen chatting about football while the stricken man was slumped against a bin. CCTV shows Mr Cope in the hospital waiting room struggling and 'clearly in pain'. After a few minutes he went to a nearby shop to get a drink and on his way collapsed twice outside the hospital doors in full view of Geary who was sat in his ambulance.

Geary watched for 30 seconds before going to help. The paramedic was told he can remain in the profession as he was handed a two-year conditions of practice order at the Health and Care Professions Council in south London on Monday. Panel chairman Ian Hughes said: "The panel has considered this case very carefully and makes the following order: for two years from the date that the order comes into effect Mr Hughes must abide by some conditions of practice."

Mr Hughes outlined the conditions in place, including the creation of a personal development plan and reflective report by Geary. HCPC case presenter Laura Ryan said: "You [the panel] find the reflections made by the registrant do not quite hit the mark for somebody who has received a conviction for something quite so serious."

But Simon Hoyle, defending Geary, replied: "In a 12-year career he made one mistake and has been paying for it ever since." Geary previously admitted he should have taken further action. He said: 'My behaviour wasn't up to standard and I should have raised my concerns about the patient earlier on when he was put into the waiting room. My mindset was wrong and my decision making was wrong.'

He was given an eight-month suspended sentence in February 2015 after being convicted of failing to undertake his duty and help the patient at Wolverhampton Crown Court. Geary resigned from West Midlands Ambulance Service following a disciplinary hearing. But he continued to practice since the incident despite being the subject of a criminal investigation and subsequent conviction. He currently works as a paramedic at school sports events.

## Drinks all round as festival saved



Barman Michael Burt and licensee Kim Langford of The Black Country Arms, celebrate

THIS year's Walsall beer festival still went ahead over three days – despite it almost being cancelled just days before.

Beer lovers descended on the venue at The Black Country Arms on High Street on Friday, Saturday and Sunday after the venue for the festival was changed at the last minute. Walsall Camra made the shock announcement that the event was cancelled last Wednesday.

Reasons beyond organisers' control were cited as the reason behind plans for it to take place at the original venue at MPV on Whittmore Street being axed.

However, thankfully The Black Country Arms was able to step in to save the day.

Beers were also available at The Wheatsheaf

on the Birmingham Road, The Victoria in Lower Rushall Street, The Fountain in Lower Forster Street, The Drunken Duck in High Street and The White Lion on Sandwell Street.

Some enjoyed a Sunday roast with their ale on the final day. Among those grateful for the event being back would have been one visitor called John Green who told the local organisation's social media page he was travelling from Malaysia just to attend the festival saying he was 'gutted' when it was initially announced it had been cancelled.

Meanwhile, a delighted attendee – Andy Higgs – posted on the Walsall Camra's Facebook page: "Fantastic night had by all, thank you for all the trouble."

# Funding lure of 'Greater Birmingham' is on cards

COUNCIL bosses and business leaders from the Black Country are trying to drum up billions of pounds of investment under the banner of 'Greater Birmingham'. They have travelled to the luxury French Riviera resort town of Cannes to try and win billions of pounds in funding from the world's biggest investors event – MIPIM.

The Midlands will have one of the biggest exhibitions with a 200 sq m pavilion at the event with information on £14 billion worth of projects.

On the website for the Midlands delegation it described Birmingham, the Black Country and Solihull as 'Greater Birmingham'.

But it appears to have been removed after an approach by the Chronicle's sister paper, the Express & Star.

The term Greater Birmingham has long been controversial in the Black Country which fears its identity and heritage will be damaged by the blanket name.

Walsall Council's Conservative opposition leader councillor Mike Bird said: "We thought the name Greater Birmingham was long dead. But it seems it has reared its ugly head again. We don't want."

"The Black Country is not part of Birmingham. We have our own unique identity and heritage."

# Joy for school in 'good' rating

A BLACK Country school is celebrating progress after being rated as 'good' by Ofsted. Villiers Primary School in Bilston was previously rated as 'requires improvement' when inspected in 2015.

Ofsted lead Inspector Steve Nelson said acting headteacher Lisa Maskell and her team had brought about 'significant improvements in pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching'.

Good teaching, and the positive learning behaviour of Villiers' pupils, has led to 'outcomes rising rapidly, especially in reading, writing and mathematics', the education watchdog said.

Mrs Maskell said: "Our school motto is 'Work hard. Be kind'. It is a privilege to work with such a talented and dedicated staff and children who embody these values."

# Illness blamed for railway problems

LONDON Midland has blamed a 'spike in illness' for overcrowding problems on the Chase Line earlier this year.

Walsall North MP David Winnick wrote to London Midland on the back of Amanda Milling MP for Cannock Chase doing the same in recent months.

The operator replied: "Performance did dip due to a combination of factors including a spike in illness. I am pleased to report however that on the four weeks to February we ran 98.7 per cent of all advertised services during the period."

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## Last-ditch fights fail to prevent closures

NINE libraries will still be closed across the borough despite a last-ditch attempt by some councillors to save them. Two Walsall Council scrutiny groups called on authority bosses to impose a 12-month stay of execution for axed-threatened libraries in Beechdale, Blakenall, New Invention, Pelsall, Pleck, Pheasey, Rushall, South Walsall and Walsall Wood.

A report said: "The cessation of a library service from 30th June 2017 will adversely affect the health and wellbeing of Walsall residents. There is a concern that consultation with minority groups, in particular the disabled, was not sufficient to ensure that their views were represented."

But on Friday the council's cabinet committee held a special meeting in the evening where they ruled to press on with the original proposals.

Leader Sean Coughlan said: "We have listened to people's concerns around the original proposals and that is why we have adopted the model agreed by Cabinet on February 8 and approved by council on February 23, and put £1.5 million back into the overall Libraries, Leather Museum and Local History Centre Service."

"This means that the service will be run at a cost of £2.5m, compared to the original budget proposal of £1m."

Addressing scrutiny groups' recommendations Councillor Coughlan added: "There is no budget available to keep any of the nine libraries listed for closure open after June 30 and so these libraries will close on that date."

## Students' chance to air their views

WALSALL College students had the opportunity to get their voices heard during its annual student conference.

The 12th event, which was held in the college's business and sports hub, was a chance for students to discuss key issues and make changes to improve their learning experience.

The conference is designed to recognise and champion the views and ideas of its student body and is extremely popular with students.

Jatinder Sharma OBE, principal and chief executive of Walsall College added: "Here at Walsall College, we are committed to continue providing students with an outstanding learning environment."

## Firearms fear man in distress is held

POLICE received a call from members of the public who reported a man in distress. Reports initially suggested that the man had a weapon and firearms officers were sent to Holly Lane in Great Wyrley on Friday, March 3.

On arrival, the man was carrying a white pole and was in a distressed state. No member of the public was

# Dozens of missing persons found dead

MORE than 65 people reported as missing across the West Midlands and Shropshire last year were eventually found dead, figures have revealed.

A report from the National Crime Agency on missing persons data for 2015/16 has revealed the figures, with police forces in Staffordshire, West Midlands, West Mercia and Dyfed-Powys dealing with thousands of cases of people going missing.

In total, 9,835 people were recognised as missing by the forces over this time, with 2,338 classed as high risk. Tragically, 68 people were found dead during this time, with West Midlands Police accounting for 31 of that figure.

One of the most shocking figures from the report shows that over the last two years, the number of

cases of children logged as missing by West Midlands Police has risen by 74 per cent.

According to the report, the reason for this large increase is currently being investigated.

All areas have seen an increase in reports over the last two years, with reports of missing children going up by 55 per cent in the area covered by Dyfed-Powys police, 74 per cent in the West Midlands, 17 per cent in Staffordshire and 15 per cent in West Mercia. It was nearly the same with the number of adult reports, which increased by 11 per cent in Staffordshire, 18 per cent in West Mercia and 48 per cent in Dyfed-Powys.

However, West Midlands Police saw a five per cent decrease over that time. West Mercia Police

Chief Inspector Jennie Mattinson said that the force conducted a major review into the way it responds to missing people last year.

She said: "People who go missing are often some of the most vulnerable members of the community. "With any missing person, our first priority is ensuring they are found safe and well. We then look at any underlying reasons behind why they went missing and look to address these issues."

"Last year we conducted a major review of the way we respond to missing people."

"This has allowed us to better identify underlying issues with regards to missing people and working with partner agencies to put support in for them at an early stage."

# Care firm investigated over topless staff claims

**HEALTH inspectors are investigating allegations that two Walsall care workers went topless at their desks to take part in online sex chats.**

A council also boss has also called for swift action over the allegations regarding the Walsall-based Caremark workers.

Caremark have declared they are 'shocked' at the revelations, which emerged following a national newspaper sting, and has suspended the two employees concerned.

The organisation, which also has a branch in Wednesfield, arranges care for people in their own homes.

Councillor Ian Robertson, responsible for health in the Walsall borough, said: "The first priority is to make sure the people who use the service are being cared for properly."

"Elderly people get confused when their care packages are disturbed. I hope this can be resolved as quickly as possible." Health and social care watchdog the Care Quality Commission (CQC) also confirmed their inspectors were going to investigate the matter.

### Undercover

The staff employed at Caremark bared their breasts in front of a camera while sitting in their office at The Enterprise Hub in Green Lane, according to the undercover investigation by a national newspaper.

The two employees also appeared on an adult website for money, the paper said. Caremark chief executive Keith Lewis expressed shock and said two internal investigations are under way. He said the care of clients was not at risk as the incident appeared to have taken place in an office, although the Caremark website indicates that families of those being cared for do sometimes visit the premises.

Mr Lewis said: "We are shocked at the alleged actions of two members of staff employed by the Wolverhampton franchisee. I have spoken to the owner to understand what has happened and what actions have been taken."

"At no time was the care of clients put at risk as the services provided by Caremark are delivered at the client's home. This incident appears to have taken place in an administrative office. A full investigation is being carried out."

Franchise owner Chris Williams added: "This is clearly not the kind of behaviour we would tolerate in our business. I am undertaking a full investigation into the circumstances of the incident."

## Marathon-marriage George hits 100



George and Phyllis have been together for more than 75 years



The young lovers seen enjoying the sunshine in a field, many years ago

"I WOULDN'T have lasted this long if it hadn't have been for you looking after me."

That is the touching tribute paid by 100-year-old George Loftus to his wife Phyllis - who he has been married to for more than three quarters of his life. The great grandparents, who met in Walsall and now still live happily together at their modest bungalow in Mulberry Road, Cannock, are likely to be the longest lasting married couple in the Midlands.

This year they will celebrate their 77th anniversary while on Friday, George reached his own personal milestone at becoming a centenarian. Although fit as a fiddle Phyllis, aged 94, is not far behind herself.

They celebrated the occasion among around 25 of their family and friends at their only child Ray's home on Pye Green Road on Saturday. Born in Willenhall, George was working at LMS railway in the 1930s, when he and a few fellow workers all waved at Phyllis as she walked passed the Rycroft Shed.

George, went to school at St. Giles and Central schools in Willenhall before becoming a painter and decorator, then a lockmaker at Kempson's before moving to LMS (London, Midland and Scottish railways) where he was everything from a fireman to a train driver.

With it being a preserved occupation during World War II he was not called up to join the Army.

He later became a miner at Mid-Cannock pit. Through their son Ray, aged 72, and his wife Gillian, 70, the couple have two grandchildren, Gaenor and Teresa, and three great grandchildren Grace, Jack and Cameron.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Winnick hits out at debut budget

WALSALL MP David Winnick has branded Philip Hammond's first budget as 'disappointing'.

The Conservative Chancellor said he would pump an extra £2 million for England's crisis-hit social care system along with a £100m boost to reduce bed blocking in A&E departments.

He also announced National Insurance hikes for self-employed high earners, but promised to help firms hit by business rate rises. There was confirmation that another 110 free schools will be opened.

Mr Winnick, the MP for Walsall

### Sounds of the 70s with arena concert

FOUR legendary acts who were top of the pops in the 1970s will be performing on the same bill at Birmingham's Genting Arena in the autumn.

Suzi Quatro, David Essex, The Osmonds and Hot Chocolate are appearing in the Legends Live tour.

It comes to the arena at the National Exhibition Centre on October 14 with tickets now on sale for the princely sum of £47.

All enjoyed their biggest hits during the 1970s and 80s with records such as Can The Can, Crazy Horses, Hold Me Close and Everyone's A Winner.

### Garden conman in £250 swindle

A MAN posing as a council worker has stolen money from an elderly woman in Wednesbury. Sandwell Council is warning residents about the conman pretending to work for the authority.

He told the elderly woman that he was due to do some work on her garden - but that she'd have to pay £5,500. He then told her to give him money to pay for a skip and took around £250 from her. A spokesman for Sandwell Council said: "We never take money from tenants for repairs."

### £45k cannabis plants found at property

OFFICERS discovered around £45,000 worth of cannabis plants at a property in Great Barr.

Police had actually been called out to the address on Gorse Farm Road for another matter, when they discovered the cannabis factory at around 9pm last Wednesday. Around 100 plants were found growing in three rooms at the address.

Taking to Twitter to report their find, West Midlands Police's cannabis team said: "Up to our eyes in it!"

### Circus hotel to visit

A WOMEN'S circus theatre company is visiting Wolverhampton to perform its new show.

Circo Rum Ba Ba's L'Hotel is at the Newhampton Arts Centre in Dunkley Street tomorrow, Friday, at 7pm. Tickets are £4.50 and £8.50, call the box office on 01902 572090.

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# COUNTY NEWS

## 2,000 abusive calls made to 999 staff

HARSHER penalties need to be brought in to protect ambulance control room workers from abusive callers, union chiefs have said.

It comes after figures revealed call handlers with West Midlands Ambulance Service received almost 2,000 abusive calls between 2013 and 2016.

Figures revealed hundreds of verbal attacks across the country in the past three years including threats to kill, and racist and sexual slurs. The union Unison has now urged the Government to bring in tougher punishments to deter abusive callers.

## Apprenticeships route for pupils

TWO thirds of pupils in the West Midlands aged between 16 and 18 say they will consider an apprenticeship after leaving school as a route into employment. The figures have been released in a study from the Association of Accounting Technicians (ATT).

The survey showed 47 per cent of 16-30-year-olds in the region think an apprenticeship could fast track their careers over university.

In hindsight, more than two thirds, 68 per cent, of degree holders in the region would now consider an alternative route into employment.

## Funds boost for community help

STAFFORDSHIRE is set to benefit from a multi-million pound fund to increase the number of community organisers – who help to build relationships and networks in communities to create social and political change through collective action.

County council communities chief Gill Heath, said: "It's really exciting news that we are going to see even more community organisers. We want Staffordshire to be a great place to live, with strong and resilient communities that work for everyone." Find out more at [www.corganisers.org.uk](http://www.corganisers.org.uk)

## JLR boss calls for free and fair trade

THE chief executive of Jaguar Land Rover says the business will continue to need 'free and fair trade' with Europe following Brexit. Speaking at the Geneva Motor Show, Dr Ralf Speth said Europe was the most important market for JLR as it sells 120,000 cars a year in Europe, which also supplied essential components.

JLR, with its engine manufacturing centre at Wolverhampton, unveiled its revolutionary Range Rover Velar and Jaguar I-PACE Concept electric car.

## Ians at the double

A SINGER/SONGWRITER from Kidderminster is supporting singer Ian McCulloch at the Robin 2 in Bilston.

The Echo and the Bunnyman frontman has a solo concert in the club on May 9. Ian Passey, who records and performs as The Humdrum Express, will be playing before him.

# Ten more Co-op bank branches face axe

THE Co-operative Bank has said it is planning to close another 10 branches in the next year as it looks to cut costs further.

The troubled lender is talking to potential bidders after putting itself up for sale, and has now announced that it remained deep in the red last year.

The bank, which has around four million customers and branches in Dudley Street, Wolverhampton, The

Bridge in Walsall, Hagley Street in Halesowen and Greengate Street, Stafford, posted losses of £477.1 million for 2016 as it continued to be hit by 'legacy issues' of the past and rock-bottom interest rates, although it narrowed losses from £610.6m in 2015.

Chief executive Liam Coleman said the group faced 'a number of challenges' last year. He added: "Obvi-

ously, we are only a few weeks into the sale process but we are pleased with the interest to date and engaging with potential bidders as planned."

The latest annual losses mean the bank has racked up more than £2.7 billion of losses over the last five years.

The bank almost collapsed in 2013 after the discovery of a £1.5bn black hole in its finances and it was forced

into a painful debt-for-equity swap. As a result, the loss-making lender is now majority-controlled by US hedge funds.

Mr Coleman said: "The historically-low interest rate environment, legacy issues and the cost of the scale of transformation required continued to impact on the performance of the business. Today's results reflect those factors."

# Son's fury as man, 82, has to wait in corridor

By Carl Jackson

**A SON has slammed the treatment of his 82-year-old father who had to wait on a hospital gurney for hours before being admitted onto a ward.**

Dennis Hill, from Wednesbury, was taken to Walsall Manor Hospital's emergency department with suspected chest pains after calling an ambulance around 8.30am on Thursday.

But he was not actually placed on a ward until around 7pm whilst he was left to wait unattended on a gurney in corridor for several hours according to his angry family members.

Hospital bosses have assured that Mr Hill was dealt with correctly and was not made to wait any longer than he should have had to.

But son Stephen Cowdell aged 59, from West Bromwich, has heavily criticised his father's care.

He said that Mr Hill, a former welder of vintage cars, has had a litany of health problems including numerous heart bypasses as well as having had several pacemakers fitted.

## Bypasses

Mr Cowdell said: "It's a disgrace. He had to wait for hours without being spoken to or been seen by a doctor. He has got a medical file almost as tall as the hospital and had a lot of health problems. He only has one lung, he has had heart trouble, having had several bypasses over the years. I'm really upset about the way he has been treated."

Mr Cowdell said his father was later preliminarily diagnosed with a suspected angina attack.

In response Philip Thomas-Hands, chief operating officer at Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust said: "Our Emergency Department is extremely busy and we thank our patients for bearing with us during long waits."

In this particular case however, Mr Hill was appropriately triaged, seen by the department's medical team and admitted to the appropriate ward. We'd like to take this opportunity to wish him all the best with his recovery.

## Boat club stays afloat with relaunch



Next to the jetty, Aldridge Model Boating Club members seen at Swag Pool, off Stubbers Green Road

A MODEL boating club has been relaunched after leaving its home of more than two decades.

The group formerly known as the Sandwell Model Boating Club is now the Aldridge Model Boating Club after members decided to move to a new base.

Dartmouth Park in West Bromwich was no longer deemed suitable for the club's needs and members were invited to become part of Aldridge Sailing Club at Swag Pool, situated in the Walsall village.

Model boating had been a fixture at Dartmouth Park since 1991 but members are now looking ahead to a new era.

They were forced to look elsewhere, they say, as boating at Dartmouth Park had been made more difficult by weeds in the pool and a rise in pedal and rowing boats' numbers. Enthusiasts put their model yachts and scale boats on the



Members messing about in the water

Aldridge waters for the first time at the weekend.

The club has been running since the 1970s. They had spent some time at Swan Pool in Sandwell Valley Country Park but were keen to find a permanent home.

Chairman Brian Morris said: "It has been a blessing in disguise, the



Launching a model at the pool

new facilities are great. Everybody from Aldridge Sailing Club has been great. We have refurbished and modernised the jetty area and are now affiliated with them and working in a good environment. It was great at Dartmouth Park but it is now even better." For details call Mr Morris on 0121 605 1470.

# Leader of Lib Dems hits out at lack of help

THE Government needs to stop fobbing off its responsibilities to local authorities, a Walsall council boss has claimed.

Councillor Ian Shires, the leader of the Liberal Democrats in Walsall which runs the council in a coalition with Labour, has called on the Conservative government to not leave it to local authorities to fix the 'deepening crisis'.

He has warned by 2020 there will be a £2.6 billion funding gap in social care. As £86 million worth of cuts to services over the next four years looms large, Walsall Council has often pointed the finger at central government when it comes to explaining why the borough is in such a poor financial situation.

Now, Mr Shires has said 'councils alone' cannot be expected to fix the situation. He said: "The Government cannot keep on fobbing off their responsibilities to council tax payers by expecting councils alone to fix this deepening crisis."

"The Local Government Association has warned that the cost of funding the national living wage to social care services is likely to be more than £600 million."

"Not only will this social care precept not meet the national living wage cost it means that non of it is going to help sort the crisis in providing social care needs."

"This will lead to further problems in the NHS. By 2020 there will be a massive £2.6 billion funding gap in social care."

## Acrylic expert to put work on show

A SELF-TAUGHT artist who specialises in oil and acrylic painting has launched his own exhibition.

Retired engineer Malcolm Jones, 70, from Essington, taught himself a range of techniques to develop his skills in the craft after he retired in 2011. His exhibition is at the Chase-water Innovation Centre, Brownhills, until March 24.

He said: "Upon retirement in 2011, I continued my interest in art as a hobby, teaching myself from library books, analysing the processes an artist had used to produce a particular painting and then copying these, in order to practice and develop my technique."

Jones says he has been influenced by the work of John Constable and some of the Pre-Raphaelites.

## City date for punk rockers Sham 69

PUNK rock group Sham 69 will play Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms later this year. The band, led by singer Jimmy Pursey, are to appear on November 24. Sham 69, formed in 1976, had a string of hits including If The Kids Are United and Hershaw Boys.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Shuttle missions Don lands at club

NASA astronaut Don Thomas is set to land in Walsall later this month. The space veteran, who has been on four shuttle missions, will appear at The Calderfields Golf and Country Club on Wednesday, March 22.

Doors will open at 6.15pm ahead of a 6.45pm start. Thomas has logged more than 1,000 hours in space travelling over 17 million miles.

The 61-year-old from Cleveland Ohio became an astronaut in 1991 and flew in space in 1994, 1995 and two occasions in 1997. Visit [www.astronautevent.co.uk](http://www.astronautevent.co.uk) to book tickets.

Rent out Guildhall for £5k per month

Walsall's historic Guildhall – currently the home of Sofia's Italian restaurant – has been put up for rent.

The landmark site on the High Street was formerly a court, police station and prison cells. The three-storey 12,500 sq ft building has been listed by Bond Wolfe and is available at £5,417 per calendar month.

The current building replaced two previous guildhalls. The first was the Medieval Guild of St John the Baptist, which controlled trade in the town. It was rebuilt in the 18th century and used as a magistrates court until 1976.

Parents inspire chef's business

A YOUNG chef has launched a new business around his passion for food. Ashik Ali opened Mothers Spice in Rough Hay Road, Darlaston.

The 22-year-old has dedicated the new venture to the support and encouragement he received from his parents. He will be working with his father and three other staff members.

Mayor of Walsall, Councillor Kath Phillips, and her consort Maurice Ribbon, launched the new venture during a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

School reunion due to be held at hotel

FORMER pupils of Edward Shelley High School in Walsall are holding a reunion which is due to take place on Saturday.

The reunion is being held at Lyndon House Hotel, situated in Upper Rushall Street.

The event is scheduled to run from 1pm onwards, until late afternoon, with all former pupils welcome to attend.

For further information contact Robert Sim on 01922 743618.

Taylor-made music

JAZZ guitarist Martin Taylor is playing at Lichfield's Guildhall next week.

He is performing on Friday March 24 with tickets starting at £16, £14.60 for friends of Lichfield Arts and £8 for under 16's. For details, or to book tickets visit [www.lichfieldarts.org.uk](http://www.lichfieldarts.org.uk) or call 01543 262223.

Break-ins at shops spark donations to charity

MORE than £1,000 has been raised for a Black Country charity following a series of break-ins.

A total of 88 people have donated to an online fundraising page to Compton Hospice. It comes after six of the charity's shops were raided – causing £5,000 worth of damage.

The stores targeted were in Wolverhampton, Codsall, Brierley Hill, Willenhall and Cannock. In a message put out on the charity's Twitter account, a spokesman said: "Thank you to everyone for your kind words, donations & offers of help following break-ins at our charity shops."

The latest raid – which happened at the Birches Bridge store in Wolverhampton Road, Codsall – was last Wednesday. The would-be thieves smashed through a skylight, broke through a plastered wall inside, but left with nothing after being unable to get inside the safe. The damage at the shops has left the charity with a repair bill of more than £3,500.

Only in two of the raids – at Skinner Street in Wolverhampton and High Street Brierley Hill on January 29 and February 8 – did thieves manage to take the safe. In the raid in Church Street, Cannock, in December, the would-be thieves broke the alarm and CCTV system, but escaped with nothing.

The shop in Stafford Street in Willenhall was broken in to between Christmas and New Year's Eve – but again the thieves caused damage to a rear door, sorting room and the safe, but left empty-handed.

School bosses in funding hope

BOSSSES at a 'dilapidated' school that needs funding for essential work will soon learn whether it will receive government cash. An application for cash to renovate All Saints National Academy in Bloxwich last year was unsuccessful, prompting MP for Walsall North David Winnick to take the issue to the House of Commons.

A new application for funding was submitted to the Education Funding Agency and now Mr Winnick has revealed the school will find out next month whether the bid was a success.

The school was visited by Minister of State for Schools, Nick Gibb, last year after an invite from Mr Winnick.

Mr Winnick said he wanted Mr Gibb to 'see for himself' the dilapidated state of the building.

Uniform firms work together

WALSALL-BASED Crested Schoolwear has teamed up with UK brand Trutex. A spokesman said: "Due to the growth of the business and our new partnership, we are delighted to provide this local uniform service."

Vevo video boost for singer Jorja



Hotly-tipped – Jorja Smith

A HOTLY-TIPPED musician in Walsall is the first to have one of her music videos funded by video hosting service Vevo, it has been revealed.

Jorja Smith finished fourth in the BBC's Sound of 2017 competition and was introduced on stage by world famous Canadian rapper Drake in Birmingham last month.

Now, the YouTube streaming service Vevo is in the business of funding music videos, starting with the new single from the 19-year-old.

In November, Vevo selected Smith as one of this year's Dscvr Ones to

Watch artists, and now the video platform has produced the video for her new song Beautiful Little Fools, according to [www.musicweek.co.uk](http://www.musicweek.co.uk).

The move into funding music videos comes as the company bids to supporting emerging, unsigned artists.

James Moodie, senior manager of music and talent at Vevo, told the online magazine: "It was clear from the outset of meeting Jorja that she has an amazing talent."

The video has not yet been released. It was shot at London's Rivoli Ballroom and directed by Hector Dockrill.

In February she was also spotted with Drake in a Co-operative shop on Broadway and he posted a photo of the artist's EP, Project 11, on his Instagram. Jorja Smith recently announced a six-date tour, which will be starting at the 02 Academy 2 in Birmingham on April 1.

Then shows in Brighton, London, Leeds, Glasgow and Manchester will follow. Jorja's tour comes hot on the heels of a sold out debut UK tour at the end of last year followed by a sold out debut US tour in January. Tickets for the performances are on sale now.

Fly-tippers set to face £400 on-the-spot fines

FLY-TIPPERS caught red-handed in Walsall will be hit with tough new £400 on-the-spot fines from next month.

The fines are jumping up just six months after £80 on-the-spot fines were introduced.

Walsall Council was set to give the go ahead to the introduction of the new fixed penalty notices at a cabinet meeting held last night, Wednesday, with any fly-tippers caught in the act from April 1 to be hit with a £400 fine.

The £80 fines are currently given out by private enforcement firm 3GS for offences including dog fouling, littering and small scale fly-tipping, however the bigger fines will relate only to fly-tipping.

The council has also revealed that last year alone, there were 5,389 incidents of fly tipping in Walsall, resulting in just under 3,000 tonnes of waste to clear, costing the authority £408,000. This is excluding waste left on unauthorised encampments and does not include the cost to private businesses for clearing fly-tipped waste from their land.

Frontline

Currently, for larger scale fly-tipping, the council has to go through the courts to punish offenders. Councillor Chris Jones, Walsall Council's portfolio holder for clean and green services, said the money spent on clearing up fly-tipping would be better off going towards frontline staff wages.

He said: "We have recognised how serious a problem this is across the whole country and that we are being affected badly."

Last year we spent £400,000 clearing up fly-tipping, that could have been used to pay the wages for an extra 16 frontline staff, who could have done all sorts of work to help out communities.

Councillor Jones added that discussions over whether it would be 3GS, another similar company or the council who would be responsible for issuing the notices were ongoing. Councillor Ian Shires said: "I am pleased that this is going to be introduced, we need to be taking this sort of a stand on the issue of fly-tipping, which blights communities across the country."

"It just seems to me there are certain people in Walsall who have no regard for their community and are happy to dump their problems on to others. Outside of the social aspect, the financial cost of clearing fly-tipping is huge."

Prayers are answered for contestants



Aman More, aged 17 and Yasmin Nachif, 13, both from Walsall, who took part in a prayer recital

A TEENAGER left judges with 'goosebumps' and her opponents in her wake to win first prize in a prestigious prayer recital competition. Yasmin Nachif, aged 13, from Walsall, won first prize in this year's Cranmer Awards which sees youngsters recite passages from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

Her five-minute passage wowed judges at the final of the competition held at Worcester Cathedral.

Also putting in a good performance was 17-year-old Aman More, also from Walsall, who was highly commended by the judges. Both girls are tutored by Marianne Campbell who said the pair have bright futures in speech and drama. She said: "Both girls had to learn a five minute section from the Book of Common Prayer and perform them to the audience at Worcester Cathedral."

"The adjudicators said Yas-

min's performance gave them goosebumps. They were both awarded with certificates and Yasmin was presented with a Book of Common Prayer and a cheque for £200. The language in the book is quite archaic so it is hard to learn. It is very old fashioned but is quite beautiful. I am incredibly proud. They have done exceptionally well."

Both girls chose to do a compilation of prayers from the book.

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## IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



# Call me a cynic but this doesn't seem smart

LAUNCHING the Government's much-vaunted "Midlands Engine" in Dudley, Chancellor Philip Hammond said one of the region's key strengths was that 92 per cent of the UK's population could get to the Midlands within four hours.

Given that he has defined the Midlands as everywhere from Grimsby to the Welsh border, that probably doesn't come as too much of a surprise.

So why did he choose to launch the project in Dudley? Was it to announce a multi-billion rail connection between the town and HS2? A huge retail development to revive the dying town centre? A new media city to rival the one at Salford? Er, not exactly. He said a "smart ticket" system would operate on the railways by 2018, which is great news considering Dudley doesn't actually have a rail service.

He also said there would be more "smart motorways". Call me a cynic, but anything "smart" in the title is usually a euphemism for "doesn't work."

Like the "smart gas meters" which have just been found to have given incorrect readings, or the "smart televisions" which have been hacked by the security services.

Mr Hammond announced an investment of £25 million investment to reduce traffic congestion in the Black Country, which sounds a lot. Until you compare it to the £10 million which is being committed to upgrading the railway station at Birmingham University, or another £10 million on upgrading Symphony Hall.

Same old story there then. And how will the £25 million be used?

"The funding will provide improved access to employment sites and create a safe environment for people to walk or cycle," said the report.

It might be called the Midlands Engine. But for those of us in the Black Country, it looks like we will still have to pedal ourselves.

□ □ □

MIND you, chairman of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership says the Midlands Engine will help "change the face" of the Black Country.

Stewart Towse said: "New build specialist training facilities to support hands-on skills development, new homes for our residents and investment in infrastructure will connect all these fantastic people."

I've no idea what that means, but I presume it's positive.

□ □ □

THAT said, the Chancellor can't really win, can he? For years the Government has been berated for savage cuts, no money for public services. So last week he announced a tax rise, and sparked a mutiny.

It's the old age story. Everybody wants more investment in public services. As long as somebody else foots the bill.

## Labour leader is yet another out-of-touch politician



Jeremy Corbyn – who may not be getting the full picture when it comes to his support



No funny business – Lenny Henry gets serious in the latest series of Broadchurch



Eye-opener – A Radio 4 interview with Lord Falconer is illuminating for all the wrong reasons

# Corbyn's delusion matches Thatcher's

HUMOUR is a strange thing. It seems to work best when someone else comes a cropper, especially if that person is in a position of authority, and a delicate part of the body is involved. A North Country accent helps, too. This week, a police inspector in Burnley is reported to be recovering after being bitten on the bottom by his own police dog. Sniggering yet?

If you ever doubted the need for more grammar schools, as proposed this week, look no further than Google where you will find thousands of references to "grammar school" including this query from a lady on Mumsnet: "Would my dyslexic child thrive at grammar school?" Proberbably.

FOR the second time since they were issued, I have discovered a lost £5 note in a pocket. I can only conclude that a) the new fiver is thinner than the old one and easier to miss, or b) subconsciously we regard anything plastic as worthless.

THE most I have ever found in a long-unused pocket was a princely £38 on holiday in Devon. There is something wonderfully easily-spendable about money you didn't know you had. Any tales of unexpected bounty in the trouser department, so to speak?

YOU have to admire the sheer imagination that has gone into casting the new series of Broadchurch (ITV). It is a gritty, wine-making cop drama, examining the brutal, humiliating offence of rape. Surprisingly, the cast includes three great comedians: Charlie Higson from the Fast Show, Lenny Henry and Roy Hudd. Higson admits he was "amazed" to get the part of Ian. If this series ends in court, who will hear the case – Judge Rinder?

LONG ago, just before the Thatcher gov-

## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



ernment launched the hated poll tax, I met a Tory election candidate who said: "Wherever I go, people tell me the poll tax is the fairest tax they've ever known." It emerged that "wherever I go" was a number of Conservative Clubs he had visited on his campaign trail. So a Tory candidate hears support for a Tory tax from the Tory faithful. I was reminded of him this week when Jeremy Corbyn, apparently unmoved by the nightmare of Copeland and Labour's disastrous polls, warned us not to underestimate support for his party across the country. How can he be so deluded? Probably because wherever Corbyn goes, he hears his loyal supporters chanting "Jeremy!" and applauding his policies. It is easy to kid yourself that the wide-eyed activists you meet are just ordinary folk and that when they chant your name in adulation it is the authentic voice of Britain. It ain't.

SOME Cambridge students recently objected to "cultural appropriation" of national dishes (Jamaican stew, Tunisian rice, etc) on their college menu. A reader writes to tell me he has recently discovered that shepherds pies do not contain real shepherds, and to whom should he complain?

WE are always being urged to support local businesses which explains why Mrs Rhodes and I eschewed McDonald's and Costa this week and lunched at ye olde local teashoppe. I ordered a small coffee and got a large one. I asked for a pain au chocolat and was given a croissant and jam. Mrs Rhodes ordered soup which took 25 minutes to arrive, and then only

after reminding the waitress, who avoided eye-contact. Yes, you don't get service like that from the multinationals.

If you visit a firm's website and a page fails to load, you usually get an Americanised apology on the lines of: "Oops, we've boobed!" So I was charmed a few days ago to have this same problem with the Royal Shakespeare Company website, which responded: "No page! How did that happen? We are indeed an ass-head, and a coxcomb, and a knave, a thinfaced knave, a gu!!" Will would have approved.

FOR a fascinating insight into political thought processes, catch 'At Lunch with Becky Milligan' (Radio 4) in which the reporter buys a meal for Tony Blair's old pal and former Lord Chancellor, Lord 'Charlie' Falconer. His Lordship doesn't want to talk about Blair. He doesn't seem to know what Labour's immigration policy is. Despite being on an apple-based diet for the past four years, he doesn't know much about apples, although he confides that some are red, some are green and others are both red and green. Falconer's only real concerns seem to be his weight and forming another Labour government: "We have to get back in." He doesn't explain why.

AS a rule I would object to my TV licence fee paying for a wealthy politician's lunch. But the Falconer interview

was an education, and therefore money well spent. If any future Labour government needs a Minister of Unillumination, Falconer's your man.

ESCHEWED. That's a word I haven't used for a long time. Anyone got a tissue?

## TALKING POINT



# Annoying holes are driving us all potty!

THERE they are every morning as I drive into work. They are such a pain, and no matter how many stories we carry about them, the problem never seems to go away. Yes you may have already guessed what I am talking about – potholes.

No matter how big – and some are VERY big and deep – or small you can be sure that they are doing some damage to your vehicle.

I have, over recent years, had to have suspension work done on my little car and it is coming to the stage when I dread the next MoT because I just know that it will probably fail and the reason will point back to them.

I know that the councils are facing drastic cutbacks, and obviously issues such as social care need to take priority, but this problem is impacting on people's lives. Some of the potholes are so deep that they can literally make your car un-roadworthy, affecting the steering and balancing of the wheels, meaning they are a danger to yourself and other motorists.

I live in a village and travel down country lanes, which obviously do not carry as much traffic as the city centre, but the problems there are just as bad. Maybe this should be reflected in the amount of car tax we pay.

There seems to be plenty of money spent on these sleeping policemen, or speed bumps, whatever you want to call them. I can think of some other words!

Some of them are so high and so close together that they also have an effect on our cars. One lot in Bilbrook did such a lot of damage to a car with a low suspension, that the driver had to find an alternative route to work.

And the many motorists who complained about the height and the number of the ones down Tinacre Hill at Compton now avoid that route altogether. Maybe that was the idea!

In another area – Goscote – there have been endless complaints about potholes, but nothing done about them.

And I recently read about one roundabout in the Heath Hayes area which has 38 – yes I did say 38 – around it. Unbelievable!

So councils put your hand in your pockets. Forget about more of those annoying speed bumps. Instead put the money to good use and do a proper job of filling in the potholes, not a quick fix job that seems to last five minutes. You know what they say – you only get what you pay for. And at the moment it is the poor motorists who are the ones who are constantly paying out.

From April there will be changes in the car tax rates. I saw on social media the other day a pothole-covered street where one fed-up driver has scrawled in huge letters "What are we paying our tax for?"

I should think most drivers would echo that sentiment.

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## Getting the hump over traffic control

I RECENTLY had the pleasure of tackling the course of the Red Bull Soap Box Challenge or, as it is more traditionally known, Goscote Lane's road humps - chaos.

Cars in middle of road avoiding humps, or slowing to almost walking pace to avoid vehicle damage over humps (then speeding up, causing pollution), a bus making a fearful bang over the humps, and one driver charging past me like it was a race track, humps or not.

And also the rubber humps displayed

not only damage by vehicles striking them (mental note: inspect the suspension and underside of any vehicle from that area carefully before buying), but also gave the impression they were lifting up. I do wish residents and planners would actually note this. Where does the problem go next? If this carries on we won't need speed humps, but 50p shaped wheels, which I am thinking of patenting.

**LEE WILLIAMS**  
Great Barr

## Misplaced criticism of Reynolds

JOHN Davenport's accusation that Emma Reynolds is naive is misplaced. Emma Reynolds is moved, first, by elementary human decency.

Many citizens of other EU countries live here, often married to UK citizens and with children with dual nationality. Does Davenport wish to break up families?

Reynolds was also shadow minister for Europe. She knows her onions and appreciates the need to achieve a deal with the EU, including residence rights, before it is too late.

If anything, it is John Davenport who is naive. First, his letter shows no appreciation of where responsibility lies for insecurity among British pensioners living in Spain.

If a Spanish software engineer, contributing to the British economy in Reading, is told to bog off back to Barcelona, it is not difficult to imagine the Spanish right stirring up resentment against bed-blocking foreign pensioners in Andalusian hospitals.

Such aged folk not having paid a penny into the Spanish health system, with a knowledge of the language running to "una cerveza, por favor", and making an increasingly limited contribution to the local economy as their sterling-denominated pensions plummet.

**ALAN T HARRISON**  
Walsall

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### POST

Walsall Chronicle,  
Chronicle Editorial,  
51-53 Queen Street  
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

### EMAIL

walsall.chron@  
expressandstar.co.uk

## Communities under attack with rubbish

OUR communities are under attack from the increase in fly-tipping and lack of a clear sharp and coherent response from councils, police and courts. Such scenes of strewn rubbish have been allowed to become normalised.

There are too many gaps in the reporting, investigation, tidy up and penalties of environmental crime. There is a growing trade in the illegal disposal of house debris and refuse. Too often building material waste is being dumped to cut cost on DIY or home improvements by back-door builders.

An urgent review of the community protection system is required. Resources must be allocated across agencies to take a proactive stand against this assault on our freedoms, freedoms to protect and enjoy our environment.

Our places our towns are being ruined by this criminality. Council tax payers pay more for less. Business rates increase. There must be action as the trust in our abilities to protect our land is disappearing under a deluge of fly-tipping and litter.

**CLLR DOUG JAMES**  
Walsall

## It's mental wellbeing too!

THE front page of your issue dated February 23 reports that the council's £24.3 million Active Living Centres at Bloxwich and Oak Park 'support Walsall council's aspiration to improve Walsall residents' overall health and wellbeing', especially with regard to obesity.

Then tucked away on page 11 of the next week's edition is the news that the council's cabinet has approved the closure of the Broadway Recovery College. Can the council hierarchy explain why they provide expensive facilities to those with obesity problems, but deny support to those with mental health issues which cannot be rectified by their taking more exercise and changing their lifestyle?

**W K Bache, Walsall**

## Parades disgrace

RESPONSE to February 23 headline 'Help Keep Our Parades Alive': Councillor Creaney I think it is a disgrace that our police cannot any longer manage 10 remembrance parades, each lasting two hours at the most on one day out of 365.

I have been President of Bloxwich and Walsall Branch Royal Artillery Association for 24 years. The branch has existed for 62 years. Apart from 2015, to the best of my knowledge there has been a Bloxwich Remembrance Parade during all of those years.

Those remembered 'Gave their today for our tomorrow'. Shame on the police therefore, who with the Fire Service have had personnel on the parades in the past.

**STUART MOUNTFORD**  
Bloxwich

## Rap knuckles of Brexiters

WHY isn't the press firmly rapping the knuckles of the Brexiters for their promise of £350m a week to spend on the NHS? We constantly hear about the exaggerated financial woes of remainers and start having a go about the Brexiters' promises.

We are going to hit problems as our exit looks more certain. EU countries are not going to invest in the UK and the USA, China, India, etc, do not intend to buy more from us; they are actively looking to sell more to us while we can pay for it.

Brexiters have no facts to back up their promises of Brexit Utopia.

**ROGER WATTS**  
Walsall

### Code of Practice:

Our policy is to correct errors as soon as we can. The Chronicles adhere to the Editors' Code of Practice, which can be seen at [www.ipso.co.uk](http://www.ipso.co.uk). If you are unhappy with the accuracy of a story, write to The Editor, Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

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## Police set up capture houses to cut crime

'CAPTURE houses' have been set up in a Walsall neighbourhood to ensnare brazen burglars hitting homes during the day.

West Midlands Police has confirmed they have kitted out several properties in Caldmore with hidden cameras and infra-red sensors while every item inside can be tracked.

The bold move comes after there had been an increase in break-ins in the area with crooks on the hunt for cash, jewellery and electronic devices. Police officers have warned that intruders are typically striking on Wednesdays and Saturdays between the hours of 3-9pm.

While semi-detached houses are being targeted in particular with burglars often forcing first floor rear windows. The latest crime figures available at police.uk shows the number burglaries in the St Mathew's policing area, which covers Caldmore, nearly doubled from 27 reports in November to 48 in December.

Lysways Street was targeted the most, with three incidents recorded in the latter month, while thieves struck at Little London twice.

Temporary Ch Supt Bas Javid said: "We are bolster-

By Carl Jackson

ing our efforts in Birmingham, Coventry, Solihull and Walsall where we have seen the sharpest rise in offences. Steps we are taking include additional police patrols and the use of capture houses - homes fitted with hidden cameras and infra-red sensors - which catch offenders in the act. We are able to remotely track all of the items in the houses to provide damning evidence which we use in court.

"People should act now to review their home security and to sign up to their local Neighbourhood Watch scheme. Our website has all of the details along with images of suspected burglars who are on the run."

Walsall Councillor Aftab Nawaz, who represents Caldmore, said: "I am pleased police are taking a proactive approach."

## High-flying Steve in Curry copter



Mr Smith boards his helicopter. Picture courtesy of Channel 4  
THE man that founded Poundland jetted off from his home to a curry house by helicopter on a Channel 4 TV show.

Steve and wife Tracey Smith popped out for date night in their helicopter on show "How'd You Get So Rich?", taking to the skies from their Shropshire mansion.

The 54-year-old worked his way up from a stall in Bilston market to selling the Willenhall-based Poundland in 2002 for £50 million.

Mr Smith said: "I used to go to dad's stall at Bilston market from the age of two and learned about business and customers."

"On the stall we'd take things which had come out of the original packaging, throw them in a cardboard box and sell them for 10p. This box took more money than the rest of the stall."

Mrs Smith said on the show "you don't forget where you've come from".

His house has 13 bedrooms, a swimming pool, a pub, games room, and a grand piano. Steve held a party for 400 people in the pub.



The Poundland magnet

Steve said on the show that it took them 12 months to find the house, before renovating it and doubling its size.

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# Injured pensioner finally meets lifesaver Craig

A PENSIONER'S life was saved by a good Samaritan who helped her as she lay in agony at a borough beauty spot.

Jessie Crook, 70, from Pelsall, was walking her neighbours' dog across Pelsall Common when she slipped into freezing water, twisting her leg in the process.

As she lay in the water, unable to move, Craig Wilson, from Aldridge, was driving home from work and stopped his car to get out and offer his assistance.

Jessie was eventually rescued and required a four-hour operation on her leg, which she is now recovering from.

The pair were reunited last weekend as Jessie continues her recovery.

Jessie said: "I am moving in the right direction now, but it is a long journey. I want to thank Craig, he is a good man, I was trying to get someone's attention but so many cars drove past."

## Active

"He stayed with me and helped the ambulance staff out, that is a rare thing in society today."

Jessie's daughter Fiona Wilson said: "My mother is quite active for her age, she is 70 going on 35."

"It must have been horrible for her but this good Samaritan went out of his way to help her before the situation got any worse. Unfortunately I didn't get his full name, but Craig turned off his route home to park up his car and ran over to mom."

"He called an ambulance, waited with her, then helped carry the stretcher across the mud to the ambulance. He stayed with her until the ambulance left, even after we'd arrived. What an absolute superstar and gentleman."

Craig, 34, said he would have al-



Good Samaritan Craig Wilson, with Jessie Crook, recovering from her slip ways tried to help if he saw someone in a situation like Jessie. He said: "It just happened that I stopped at traffic lights at the right time and saw Jessie."

"It felt like the right thing to do and obviously if the same thing happened again I would do the same."

"I did joke at the time though, if it was summer I wouldn't have helped because it looked like she was sunbathing."

"Something just looked off and unfortunately when I arrived she was in a bad situation. It was nice to get to-

gether again and great to see that she is on the mend."

The Mayor of Walsall Kath Phillips launched an appeal to find Craig and reunite him with Jessie and Fiona after hearing about the story online.

She said: "Seeing all this unfold on social media really gave me pause for thought. What if Craig hadn't stopped his car and intervened?"

"What would have happened to Jessie?"

"It really doesn't bear thinking about."

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Sat 22 Apr	Cotswolds Warlike 1940's Special	£89
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# Homes will 'ruin the green belt'

**PROPOSALS to build more than 300 homes on green belt land will ruin the identity of a town near Walsall, furious campaigners have claimed.**

The plans, which will go out to public consultation at the end of the month, have sparked outrage among residents and councillors. There had been hopes that the plans for 250 homes off Highfields Road and 80 off Coulter Lane in Burntwood would be shelved at last week's cabinet meeting after dozens of furious objectors turned up.

However Lichfield District Council stood firm, saying Burntwood has to meet its allocation of homes and would have to build on these Green Belt sites if no more suitable sites were available.

Councillor Sue Woodward, who represents Burntwood, said the plans would lead to a loss of uniqueness for the area.

She said: "Both of these plans mean an encroachment on Burntwood's greenbelt, which the community are very opposed to.

"Over the years we have had more and more housing built but we do not have the services to serve them, let alone anymore.

### Unique

"For example there are not enough GP surgeries.

"At the meeting we were told that these bits of green belt land in Burntwood make up just 0.2 per cent of Lichfield's greenbelt.

"So why don't they find different bits of land that will have less of an impact?

"One of the unique and lovely features of Burntwood is that it is surrounded by green areas.

"As soon as you start encroaching into this then you start to lose the uniqueness.

"Every bit of Green Belt that gets built on is a loss of identity for Burntwood.

"I know more homes need to be built for families, but not in inappropriate areas."

### Report by Jack Avery

Councillor Eric Drinkwater, who is the deputy opposition leader on Lichfield District Council, added: "Burntwood is already over-developed and the issue of protection of green belt is the most important battle the local residents will ever have.

"If developers are allowed to build on green belt land we will become a massive urban sprawl."

Lichfield council bosses want people to give their views on the plans when consultation opens at the end of the month.

In response Councillor Ian Pritchard, Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, Development & Environment, said: "We will be consulting on our Local Plan Allocations from March 20 to May 12.

"We have carried out detailed assessments about where the housing numbers identified in our Local Plan Strategy could be developed, including Burntwood.

"Where a settlement has not met its housing number requirement within the urban area, there are proposed allocations beyond the settlement boundary with new development boundaries defined."

## Hogging limelight for Easter at arcade



**A piglet gets close to the camera ready to be star of the show at Victorian Arcade for Easter**

WALSALL residents are set to have a 'hopping' great Easter at Victorian Arcade.

On Saturday April 15 the shopping area in Walsall's town centre is inviting residents to celebrate Easter in style with its free animal farm.

From 11am until 3pm, the arcade will be welcoming a variety of spring time animals giving children the opportunity to get up close with a variety of creatures such as pygmy goats, lambs, piglets and rabbits.

Animal handlers will also be on hand to answer questions on caring for the animals.

Darren Griffiths, Senior Regional Facilities Manager of GBR Phoenix Beards, commented:

"We are thrilled to be welcoming our Easter themed animal farm to Victorian Arcade. It's a wonderful opportunity for families to get up close with a variety of spring time animals! Not only do we have our animal farm event, we are also giving our Facebook followers the opportunity to win some chocolate goodies. Full information can be found on our Facebook page."

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# Terry's joy at response on pupil names



Form 5 youngsters at Hamstead Infants and Junior School seen out in the sunshine in 1957 with their teachers

LOCAL historian and author Terry Price says he has been delighted with the response from an appeal he issued for information on two school pictures he has come across, in his research.

He uncovered two photographs of Hamstead Infants and Junior School Form 5 pupils, which he asked The Chronicle to publish, in the hope that it jogged people's memories.

All told there have been 37 names of people accounted for with the picture from 1957, and Terry wonders if there is anyone who might be able to help with the other picture from 1963...

## Positions

He explained that two readers Elizabeth Round, who now lives in Tipton and Geoffrey Sedgley who lives in Walsall replied.

Between them, the confirmed names provided, in their positions on the picture are: Third row, from the left, Ann Rollinson, Elizabeth Round, Peter Ford, David Waring, Barbara Bouter. Second row, from left, Shirley Mayo, Lynn Wall, Jeannette Webb. Seated



Teachers Dorothy Leedham and Christine Onions with Form 5 in 1963

row, second from left, Geoffrey Sedgley, Dennis Lamb, David Rushton, Philip Aston.

Other names provided, but not located on the picture are: Joy Humphries, Josie Humphries, Peter Cornfield, Charles Tandy, Peter Wigley, Jennifer Bishop, Cathleen Harris, Alan Cheeseman, Colin Chatten, Linda

Riley, David Jukes, Susan Perry, Lawrence Clements, Gillian Nicholls, Billy Billings, David Richards, Pamela Moseley, Victoria Ford, Ann Phipps, Linda Pugh, David Bunyard, David Davenport, Derek Bunn and Colin Longhurst.

Terry added: "If anyone can provide any names, I can be contacted on 01922 635891."



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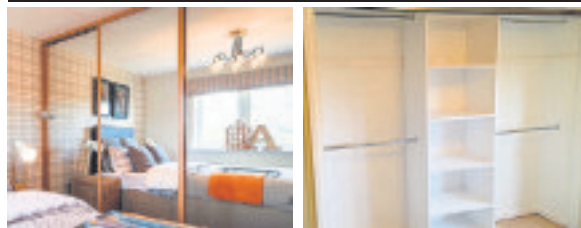
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**The Chronicle** Thursday, March 16, 2017

A WALSALL student is celebrating after achieving a high ranking in a national modelling competition.

Lalita Bhatia, aged 17, who studies at Walsall Academy, recently came third in the Miss Teen British Isles competition, putting herself in prime position to become a top model in the future.

She said: "It is my first time competing in any sort of competition and I have loved every minute."

"It has been a fantastic experience, one which I shall never forget."

### Ability

"It has given me the opportunity to realise the support I have from my family and friends, especially my parents who have kept me going strong and grounded throughout the whole process."

"I am not the most confident person at all and I would have never thought about doing anything like this, but it has shown me I do have the ability to push myself to experience new things."

Lalita, from Wolverhampton, was sponsored by Bloxwich company ASK Motors ahead of the final event, which took place in London recently.



Lalita Bhatia, who came third in a major beauty contest

# Handful of investigations to do with legal highs

## Police called to 500 incidents at prisons

**POLICE have been called to more than 500 incidents in prisons in the past six years, according to new figures.**

A Freedom of Information request has revealed they were called 531 times between 2011 and 2016 to incidents at prisons.

The most call-outs was in 2011, when there were 130 – dipping to 75 in 2016. A response issued by the force to accompany the figures, states: "Some of the incidents recorded may not necessarily have occurred on the prison premises, rather the prison may be the nearest identifiable landmark and so has been entered into the incident report."

"Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and

complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from a number of data sources used by forces for police purposes."

In 2012 there were 93 call-outs, falling slightly to 88 in 2013, there were 75 in 2014 and 70 in 2015.

The data also revealed that just eight incidents since 2014 were linked to legal highs, according to police logs.

The only prison which falls within the West Midlands Policing area is Winson Green Prison in Birmingham.

### Havoc

HMP Featherstone, HMP Oakwood and HMP Brinsford all fall under the jurisdiction of Staffordshire Police.

In December, prisoners across four wings of HMP Birmingham, run by security firm G4S, wreaked havoc, causing an estimated £2 million of damage.

More than 500 inmates, a third of the jail's population, were shipped out of what is one of the country's largest prisons following the 12-hour riot.

Birmingham is a Category B prison and holds up to 1,500 prisoners.

In January it was revealed that ambulances have been called out to prisons across the wider region more than 1,400 times in two years.

Over 2015 and 2016, the most frequently visited prison was HMP Oakwood, followed by HMP Featherstone and Winson Green.

At each prison bar Swinfen Hall, the number of call-outs increased in 2016 from 2015, with HMP Oakwood seeing the biggest rise, from 216 to 279.

The statistics do not reveal how many call-outs related to prisoners or staff, or how many of the call-out were related to violent incidents.

## Driver in hospital after crash

A DRIVER was taken to hospital after his car smashed into a tree.

The car was wrecked after the driver lost control and hit the tree situated in Walstead Road, Walsall.

He was taken to hospital suffering with arm and leg injuries after the smash which took place shortly before midnight on Saturday night.

Paramedics tended to the injured man.

Firefighters were also called to the scene.

### Impact

Debris was left scattered on the pavement of the road following the heavy impact which left the vehicle's front end completely caved in.

West Midlands Police spokesman Billy Corrigan said: "We were called by the fire service."

"The car crashed into the tree after the driver lost control."

"He was taken to hospital with leg and arm injuries."

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## Keep eyes healthy, see well into the future

### The importance of regular eye tests for maintaining sight

With an ageing population and more people facing the prospect of working later into life, it has never been more important to look after our health; both to maintain our ability to work, and to be able to enjoy life to the full.

Eyesight is key to getting the most out of life, but it's also an aspect of health that is often overlooked. So what steps can we take to ensure our eyes remain at their sharpest?

Specsavers is working with the International Glaucoma Association (IGA) on a health information campaign to raise awareness of the importance of regular eye examinations. The £1m initiative will coincide with World Glaucoma Week, which runs from March 12-18.

'We're all familiar with the usual steps we can take to maintain a healthy lifestyle as we get older,' says Dr Nigel Best, Specsavers' clinical spokesperson. 'Fitbits and apps on our mobiles monitor our steps and sleep patterns - but our eye health can easily be neglected.'

RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People) and Specsavers' 'State of the Nation' report revealed that nearly 14 million people in the UK are not having their eyes tested every two years as recommended.

'Conditions that can often affect our eyes over the age of 40 range from high blood pressure to age-related macular degeneration and can be detected by an optician during the course of a regular eye examination,' Dr Best adds. 'The earlier any such conditions are picked up the higher the chance of successfully treating them, which is why we recommend eye tests every two years.'

Glaucoma - often described as the 'thief of sight' due to its gradual onset - is one such condition that is more easily managed the sooner it is detected. It affects 600,000 people in the UK and more than 64 million people worldwide making it the leading cause of irreversible blindness globally.

Karen Osborn, Chief Executive of the IGA, says: 'Glaucoma is found in 2% of the UK's population aged over 40. Most of those people have a slow developing form of the condition and we estimate that half of all cases - that's over 300,000 people - remain undiagnosed and are unaware that they could be slowly losing their sight.'

RNIB and Specsavers' research also revealed the total cost to the UK economy of sight loss in the adult population of the UK totalled £28.1 billion, leading to a huge burden on the economy due to easily preventable vision-related issues.

Sally Harvey, CEO of RNIB, adds: 'At least half of all sight loss is preventable. Regular eye tests and early detection on the high street, followed by timely intervention and management of eye health conditions, could help save your sight.'

To donate to the IGA, text TEST17 £5 TO 70700. [Charity registered in England and Wales No. 274681 and Scotland No. SC041550]

For more information log onto [www.glaucoma-association.com](https://www.glaucoma-association.com) [www.specsavers.co.uk/eye-health/glaucoma](https://www.specsavers.co.uk/eye-health/glaucoma) or [www.rnib.org.uk](https://www.rnib.org.uk)

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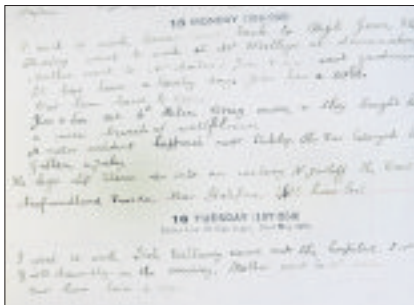
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Senior archivist Richard Lewis with metal from the hull of the Titanic



A diary that mentions the sinking on April 15 1912



An image of the fateful ship, which had been labelled as 'unsinkable'



Examples of the advertising for the maiden voyage



Replicas of the china used by second class passengers

# Collection relives fate of 'unsinkable' Titanic

**MORE than 100 years on it is a tragedy that still inspires worldwide interest – the sinking of the Titanic.**

However not many may realise the fateful ship's connection to the Black Country, which has is being explored in a new exhibition at the Dudley Archives. It runs until May 27.

A collection amassed by keen Titanic researcher and writer Andrew Lound is on display at the Tipton Road venue.

It includes a lifeboat nameplate, the White Star Line's drinks menu, a layout of the first-class accommodation to a piece of Titanic's hull.

The exhibition also includes photographs of the Titanic's 15-and-a-half-ton anchor, which was made by Noah Hingley & Sons in Nether-ton, and drawn through the streets by 20 horses in May 1911.

Andrew, of Great Barr, has sought out the region's connections to the so-called 'unsinkable' ship, which was run by the White

## MEMORY LANE

By Judith Hawkins

Star Line, and will be at Dudley Archives on March 25 to sign copies of his book 'Titanic in the Midlands'.

Archivist Richard Lewis said: "A lot of these items were in Boston, but Andrew Lound has bought them and had them sent back from America."

"There is a connection with the Midlands. A lot of the metalwork was done here, including the anchor."

The impressive array of artefacts have arrived amid an important time for Dudley Archives, which is becoming the place to see items previously displayed at Dudley Museum, which closed in December.

Mr Lewis added: "It is going really well. Work is almost finished here to accommodate the new collections from the museum."

One of the display's centrepieces is an ornate wooden panel recovered from the sea on April 15,

1912, the morning after the fatal iceberg strike, by the crew of the Irish fishing boat Proinséas Noirin.

Mr Lewis said there was a fascinating tale behind this object, which salt water tests indicate did drift from the wreckage of the Titanic.

It turns out that the passing fishing boat was gun-running for the Irish Republicans, and when they saw the distress flares of the sinking ship they thought their cover would be blown and left the scene, so were not around to assist the survivors.

As a result the crew were unaware of the Titanic's fate, only discovering the truth when they returned home two weeks later, and keeping silent due to their illegal activities.

The collection also includes China plates and platters from the White Star Line, showing the distinction made between first and second class. These include replica dinnerware that was made especially for the blockbuster film Titanic.



Richard Lewis with a restored lifeboat nameplate and a third class plate

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# Lock sculpture on the move

AN iconic lock sculpture is set to be moved from a large firm in Wolverhampton to a traffic island down the road in Willenhall.

As part of the project money will also be spent on sprucing up the town's war memorial. The sculpture, which depicts levers on a stainless steel frame, currently sits at Assa Abloy in Wednesfield, Wolverhampton.

But it will now be relocated to the Keyway Island which links Willenhall Road, Somerford Place, The Keyway and New Street. The move is likely to go down well with Willenhall locals with the town being renowned for its lockmaking heritage.

Assa Abloy has applied to Walsall Council to proceed with the project confirming they will be investing in the town war memorial.

A planning document states: "This sculpture was provided when the building was built to satisfy Wolverhampton Council's policy of 'Percent for Art'. Assa Abloy have contacted Wolverhampton City Council who have agreed that the sculpture can be moved to the Keyway Island."

## Wonderful time to Assist success



Up-and-coming band the Assist with singer Mikey Stanton, second from left

AN up-and-coming Walsall band will launch their latest single with a show in Wolverhampton on Saturday.

The Assist, who will release their new single 'Wonderful' on March 15, will mark the occasion with a show at The Grain Store on March 18.

The song was given its first airing earlier this month on Radio X, by DJ Gordon Smart and follows on from their last release 'Let Her How You Feel'.

Lead singer Mikey Stanton, whose 21st birthday coincides with the show, said: "We are buzzing to be playing The Grain Store. "We feel 'Wonderful' is our strongest single yet so what better way to get it out there than a Wolverhampton gig."

"It has 's been a few months since we played Wolves so I am sure it is going to be a mad one."

For ticket information, visit facebook.com/TheAssistBand

# Tributes after tragic death of cyclist Sean, 15

**THE family of a schoolboy who died after being knocked off his bike have paid a heartfelt tribute to the 'strongest person anyone could meet'. Sean Purchase, aged 15, spent weeks in hospital after he was hit by a car in Great Barr but died last Monday.**

His family paid an emotional tribute and said their lives would never be the same. Sean, from Great Barr, was riding along Wandsworth Road when he was hit by a grey Vauxhall Astra near to the junction of Bandywood Road on February 2.

Brave members of the public battled to try and save the schoolboy's life after the crash. A quick-thinking driver used his van to shield the injured boy from further harm.

Sean suffered a cardiac arrest at the scene and a woman performed CPR until a police officer, who was in the area at the time, was able to take over.

An ambulance, paramedic area support officer and a trauma doctor arrived at the scene and between them the medics managed to restart Sean's heart.

He was then taken to Birmingham Children's Hospital in a very serious condition under police escort for intensive treatment.

**Proud**

Today his family said in a statement: "Sean was the strongest person anyone could meet and we are so proud of him and have been truly blessed to have him in our lives. Life will never be the same for all his family and friends however his kind nature and awesome sense of humour will never leave our hearts.

"As a family we would like to thank everyone for their kind words and support at this devastating time."

Great Barr councillor Jon Hunt said: "It is a tragedy for someone so young to be taken in this way. It is a horrible thing to happen and my thoughts are with the family."

People also offered their condolences on the Express & Star's Facebook page.

Pauline Hanson said: "Such a shame



Sean Purchase, who died aged 15

condolences go to his family and friends at this sad time."

Delfern Kiffin posted: "My condolences goes to his family and friends. Rip little Man." Patricia Ball said: "So tragic such a shame."

The driver stopped at the scene and is helping police with enquiries. Officers are appealing for any witnesses who have not yet come forward to contact PC Damian Gibson at the Collision Investigation Unit on: 101 ext 843 6056 or by emailing fl\_collision\_invest@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

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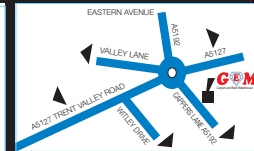
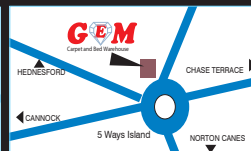
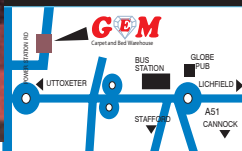
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# Fury as swim centre axes disability sessions

A LEISURE centre in Walsall has been accused of discrimination after axing its disability swimming sessions.

Bloxwich Active Living Centre, off High Street, has cut the Wednesday evening session because of poor attendance.

But upset residents have vented their frustration at the leisure centre, describing its decision as discrimination. They have taken to the leisure centre's Facebook page to make formal complaints of 'indirect discrimination' against the decision.

The complaint originated from Linda Fellows, whose son Jay, who suffers from severe autism, had been attending the weekly sessions.

She explained: "We started attending a pilot disability swimming session about five months ago. Jay enjoyed it immensely and slowly began to learn the basics of swimming. After Christmas, the session was added to the official pool programme."

## Socialising

After the session was added on a weekly basis, Mrs Fellows said swimming became part of Jay's routine and more and more people began to show up. Most of the young children who took part have autism and are unable to take part in regular public swims as it would overwhelm them.

Mrs Fellows continued: "I watched how they thrived in this environment. I saw how the parents, who might have been isolated due to their child's disability, also enjoyed a bit of socialising with others in the same position. "Our kids got used to each other's differences and began to initiate contact and stray outside of their comfort zones."

"Last week a new pool schedule was published. The disability session has been cancelled. When I spoke to the area manager, I was told they felt the session was poorly attended and since there were so many other people who wanted to use the pool at that time they could not justify the session."



Bloxwich Active Living Centre, which ran weekly disability swimming sessions

Since her post to the leisure centre, other residents have got involved with their complaints.

But Bloxwich Active Living Centre has released a statement refuting the discrimination claims. It said: "Further to the comments regarding the disability swim sessions, we routinely review our pool programmes to ensure the centre is well used and provides a service to Walsall residents."

"The disability sessions were in place for six months and were not well attended. Bloxwich Active Living Centre has some great facilities for people with disabilities and these are available at all times."

"Where people with autistic spectrum disorders do need a specific exclusive session, Bloxwich Active Living Centre (a busy centre with a pool capacity in excess of 100), may not be the most appropriate venue."

"If you or someone for whom you care would like to attend such a session please e-mail: [walsallleisure@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:walsallleisure@walsall.gov.uk) and we will investigate this option."

The pool at the leisure centre has a capacity for 140. Attendance at the disability sessions varied, according to Walsall Council, but it tended to be around three to five with a disability plus their carers.

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# Debbie hopes to hit target for Tommy

A DISABLED boy whose family are trying to raise at least £20,000 to pay for prosthetic limbs for him are being helped by a prolific fundraiser and West Brom fan.

Tommy Brown, who is five, had to have his legs, arm and fingers amputated when he was just five months old and was given a five per cent chance of survival after he contracted meningitis.

Debbie Green first heard about Tommy, who is from Lister Close, Walsall, when she saw her beloved Baggies beat Sunderland 2-0 at home on January 21. That day she was helping raise £4,300 for terminally-ill Sunderland fan Bradley Lowery, also five.

The Albion Foundation was promoting Tommy's cause on the day and she decided she wanted to do more.

She has now arranged a special charity night which will be attended by two current Albion players and four former stars.

## Sandpit

Debbie, from Birmingham, has already raised £300 by auctioning off items donated by Albion's star defender Jonny Evans, which paid for a special swing and sandpit for Tommy who attends Lindens Primary School in Streetly.

Miss Brown said: "It's going to cost between £20,000 and £25,000 for him to have special limbs. He loves running but he cannot run on the NHS's ones.

"I want the little lad to get his legs. He's a lovely little boy. If everyone gave a pound at the Albion we would have the money, just like that."

Tommy's mother Julie Tuckley said: "As he gets bigger, he wants to play football, run about and we want to give him the best."

Debbie's charity night, which has sold out, will be attended by Ally Robertson, Joe Mayo, Bernard McNally and Daryl Burgess and two current Albion stars who will be confirmed closer to the day.

It will be held at Hamstead Social Club in Great Barr, which has let it for free for the night, on April 13 from 7pm.

To donate to help Tommy, visit <https://www.gofundme.com/qpj3as>



Debbie Green, who is organising a West Bromwich Albion fundraising evening with past and present players for Tommy Brown, aged five

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# Lightwoods' glorious past brought to life

It was feared it could be lost forever but now the finishing touches are being put to the £5.2million restoration of a grade II-listed house and park.

Just over two years ago, a long-awaited project to bring Lightwoods House in Smethwick to life got under way.

The 16-acre park in which the house has stood since 1791, has also been getting a facelift so it can be widely used by the community.

The house itself has been transformed, from the reclaimed slate-tiled roof to the new oak flooring on the ground floor with many period features restored. Project contractors Heritage Building and Conservation were last week in the final stages of decorating, carpeting and carpentry and it is expected that the house will re-open in the summer.

## Preserved

On the ground floor, there is a new tea room with a seating area which will extend on to the terrace during the summer months. An annexe has been constructed on one side of the house using the former stable block and has been designed to mirror the opposite end of the property.

On the second floor is the grand 'long room' which will be the main events room and used for functions such as weddings as well as conferences. While the second floor has been converted into office space and will be let out to different businesses. Around the house, little bits of its past has been preserved. These include original decorative ceiling cornices found in some of the rooms. Although it was not possible to save all of them due to dry rot, the original pieces that have survived have been replicated with the



Outside the front of the house



The councillors seen in the cafe area



A restored garden feature

help of students from Sandwell College. Sandwell Council leader Councillor Steve Eling said it was 'fantastic' to see the house coming back to life.

As the restoration draws to a close, the project team is on the hunt for forgotten old photographs of the park or house to help with a display to inform



James King from Great Barr at work visitors of the heritage and social history of the site.

Anyone with photographs taken at Lightwoods can upload them onto the Facebook group page [www.facebook.com/LightwoodsParkandHouse](http://www.facebook.com/LightwoodsParkandHouse) or call community engagement officer Julia Morris on 0121 569 4740.

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Home-Start Walsall volunteers can also attend optional ongoing training in First Aid, Food Safety with certificate upon successful completion. IMPS Injury Minimisation half day workshop on Thursday 8th June and The Happiness Project (Thursdays 9:30-1:30 for 5 weeks) call for start dates in April & June

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# Being in the limelight is Heaven for Emeli

She started out on the sidelines. Emeli Sande spend the early part of her career writing hits for other performers. After teaming up with producer/writer Shahid Khan, aka Naughty Boy, she worked on tracks for Alesha Dixon, Chipmunk, Professor Green, Devlin, Preeya Kalidas, Cheryl Cole, and Tinie Tempah.

"I was doing a show in London for 1Xtra and I met this guy called Naughty Boy. We got in the studio and we clicked work wise. We just started writing, not necessarily for me, we just thought 'let's write a pop tune' and experiment. And we wrote the Chipmunk track and I thought nothing of it. Naughty Boy sent it off to Chipmunk who really liked it and wrote his stuff around it."

Sande, however, hankered to be centre stage, rather than in the wings. And her big break came in 2011 when she released her debut single, Heaven. Soon, she was at the top of the charts as Read All About It gave her her first number one hit and she won a BRIT Award for British Breakthrough Act before being flown out to the USA to perform at the White House for President Obama.

## TURMOIL

Sande, who plays the O2 Academy in Birmingham on Sunday, had great expectations to live up to when she released her second album last year. And while Long Live The Angels couldn't quite match up to her seven-times debut, Our Version of Events, it reached number two on the chart and earned a gold disc.

"We've been doing a lot of album promotion, radio and TV, packed a lot in. So it's been a bit busy, but all quite fun. Hopefully it was worth it."

But while Sande has enjoyed remarkable success in her professional life, it's taken a toll on her personal life. Her ten year-relationship with Adam Gouraguine, the marine biologist she started dating at 17 and married in 2012, floundered and ended in divorce after a year.

That break-down was the catalyst for Long Live The Angels, which Sande wrote to process the turmoil.

"I knew I had put so much on pause. Travelling around you do that. You put your personal life on hold, so I knew I had to take time off to know myself and what I wanted to do. Towards the end of last year I felt ready to get out there and show the music."

"I didn't feel pressure from the outside. When I write I take myself away and surround myself with friends and musicians, people I love, so any pressure comes from me, nitpicking and making it right. I wanted to make something that was worth four years out and reflected what those years of growth were for me. I wanted to tell a story of survival, that was very honest about the lows and the highs. I wanted to say you can get through it and find self-love, which I found towards the end, that's the message."

Sande's new record tracks her journey through trauma to solitude, from optimism to celebration.

"I feel like the last four years changed me. I'm much more realistic in my view of the world and my place in it. I have grown up a lot. Before I shied away from being independent

Emeli Sande takes centre stage at Birmingham O2 Academy on Sunday



and having responsibilities and being a grown up. As long as you do your job writing songs, everything is done for you, which is amazing, but I needed to learn grown up skills and develop knowledge and independence, self-awareness and identity. Now I'm more confident in what I want to say. It's a cliché, but it's about understanding yourself and your identity. Over this time I stepped into womanhood and adulthood and understood the reality of life. I went on a crash course of life. It was a coming of age."

Sande has finally come to terms with the whirlwind nature of her success. Though she had hoped her solo work would be successful, even she was taken aback.

"Before my first album came out, I wrote with Alicia Keys. She kind of became a big sister. She'd be like, 'You have to schedule personal time'. Because I wasn't that busy, I was like, Well, you're Alicia Keys — but that probably doesn't apply to me. Now looking back, I'm like, Okay, that's why she said it. Even if it feels weird scheduling it in, you have to make sure you do nothing. It's so important that your family and the people you love have your attention, and you're still involved in real life."

"When a label gets involved, and

*I wanted to tell a story of survival, very honest about the highs and lows*

they want to push your music even to a bigger audience, you have to start keeping up with this pace. I think that unless you're feeling very healthy — mind, body, and soul — you can't get on that racetrack. You have to be so strong, and your personal life has to just be on the back burner. And for me, that was the part I didn't really like. "There's nothing I regret. [But] I did start to feel very tired. I didn't have time to get better as an artist — and you have to live, to have something to write about. [I was] 22, 23 when it all started, and those are such crucial years to get to know yourself, especially going from a girl to a woman."

"I look up to Nina Simone, Janis Joplin, and Joni Mitchell, and the depth of their lyrics, you can tell they'd really been in love and they'd really experienced things. I wanted to do more than [make] something that was selling, I really wanted to make art. I wanted to get very deep. You know, I'd left medical school to do this. I've given up a career that would've been really special to me to do this, so I've got to do it properly."

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.



Potent quartet – Warpaint



## Heads Up for new sound

It's easy to get the wrong impression about Warpaint, the Los Angeles-based rock band that have become an icon of indie cool and a touchstone for a new generation of women in rock.

The band's studio albums tend to emphasise moody atmospheres: gauzy keyboards, hypnotic harmonies and sinister grooves. Third studio album *Heads Up*, released last year, varies that template somewhat with its sinewy beats. The single *New Song* saw them flirting with pop.

In concert, however, the potent quartet of vocalist/guitarist Emily Kokal, vocalist/guitarist Theresa Wayman, bassist/vocalist Jenny Lee Lindberg and drummer/keyboardsist Stella Mozgawa temper the moodiness with bumped-up tempos and high energy. Fans will get to experience that when Warpaint play

Birmingham's O2 Institute on Wednesday. Of course, confounding expectations has been part of Warpaint's m.o. since the band formed in 2004. And so when the band convened to make *Heads Up*, they shared a common goal: to make a faster, dance-orientated record.

"We've always had this really jammy, high-energy live show compared to some of our records," Kokal says. "We all love to dance."

"We didn't want to take away from the emotion or the core feeling of what our band is all about, but we wanted to bump the speed up and have a little bit more fun."

Warpaint spent only four months in the studio making *Heads Up*, the quickest they've ever made a record.

But Lindberg says: "I feel really proud of what we made. 'I love the way that it came together so nicely.'"

## No More Heroes? Stranglers fit bill



Though propelled into the spotlight by punk rock, The Stranglers were always one of the more accomplished and musically credible New Wave bands of the 1970s.

Their melodic rock sound, with swirling keyboards from Dave Greenfield and JJ Burnell's distinctive rumbling bass, was tied to a fearsome live reputation. More than 40 years on they can still out-rock bands less than half their age.

'The Men in Black' are back on the road again this month and have a gig at Birmingham's O2 Academy on Saturday night.

Following the sell-out success of their Black and White Tour in

March last year, the group will this time present the 'Classic Collection' to coincide with the planned re-release of their entire studio album catalogue from 1977-82.

Live dates so far suggest fans can expect such early favourites as Dagenham Dave, Sometimes, Peaches, Nice 'n' Sleazy, Grip and Down In The Sewer, alongside chart hits Skin Deep, Golden Brown and No More Heroes.

Lead singer Hugh Cornwell left the band in 1990 and now The Stranglers, after a 16-year stint by Paul Roberts, are on to third lead singer, Baz Warne, formerly of Smalltown Heroes. The legendary Ruts DC provide support.

Other major concerts over the next week include Brit Awards

winner Emeli Sandé's Long Live The Angels tour to Birmingham O2 Academy on Sunday. That's the night after the venue's no3 room presents a seven-band bill topped by Wolverhampton's Jump The Shark.

On Thursday (March 23) pop star Olly Murs starts a three-night stint at the Genting Arena.

At Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms, LA Guns are in concert on Saturday and Love/Hate on Thursday. In between rock fans can catch Finland's Battle Beast, fronted by the formidable Noora Louhimo, on Wednesday.

The Strawbs play Bilston's Robin 2 on Wednesday and Paul Carrack has two nights at Symphony Hall on Friday and Saturday.

## Teetering on the brink of madness

The University of Birmingham Chorus and Symphony Orchestra are in concert at Birmingham Town Hall on Saturday.

Other classic highlights include Singalong with the CBSO as chorus and orchestra, conducted by Simon Haley, perform Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.

Hollywood star John Malkovich plays a dictator teetering on the brink of madness, standing alone against the mighty Symphony Hall organ, played by Martin Haselböck, in *Just Call Me God!* on Tuesday evening.



## Just gran-d as stage set for Walliams' book

Actor and comedian David Walliams is fast making a name for himself as a children's author in the tradition of Roald Dahl and, one of his latest books to be adapted for the stage, *Gangsta Granny*, will be at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre from Wednesday to Sunday (March 22-26).

Young Ben is anticipating a diet of cabbage and boredom when sent to spend time with his gran, but is in for a big surprise.

Produced by Birmingham Stage Company, the team behind the much-loved stage versions of *Horrible Histories*, fans of Walliams' cheeky humour will no doubt delight in the transition from page to stage.

Tickets start at £12. To book, call the Lichfield Street venue's box office on 01902 429212.



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SUNDAY'S TV MARCH 19

CHOICE



Brenda Blethyn

**Vera (ITV, 8pm)**  
New series. The detective investigates when the body of a wildlife ranger is found on a remote island off the coast of Northumberland. Her death is at first assumed to be an accident, since she was alone on the island when she died, but marks on the body seem to point to murder. As Vera delves into the dead woman's personal life, she uncovers dark secrets and old resentments. Brenda Blethyn, Kenny Doughty, Jon Morrison, Christopher Colquhoun, Noof McEwan, Riley Jones, Lisa Hammond and Ewan Stewart star.

BBC1

**6.00** Breakfast. **7.30** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Flog It! (R) **2.15** Countryfile Spring Diaries. (R) **3.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.45** Lifeline. **3.55** Songs of Praise. **4.30** Shop Well for Less? (R) **5.30** BBC News. **5.50** Regional Programme.  
**6.00** **The Big Painting Challenge.** Mariella Frostrup and Rev Richard Coles present the final from Greenwich. At Queen's House, the artists are challenged to paint a portrait, but are not told who the subject is until the setting begins. For the last test of the series, the painters must depict the Old Royal Naval College as seen from the Thames – and mentors Diana Ali and Pascal Anson are not on hand to help this time. Judges Lachlan Goudie, Daphne Todd and David Dibosa assess their efforts and reveal who is this series' champion. Last in the series.  
**7.00** **Countryfile.** Matt Baker and Anita Rian present the show from the Hoo Peninsula, reporting on the influence of the local "salt shepherds" and efforts to protect the birds that flock to the area.  
**8.00** **Antiques Roadshow.** Fiona Bruce presents the show from Burton Constable Hall near Hull, where historic items brought in to be valued include a series of letters written by Florence Nightingale.  
**9.00** **SS-GB.** Archer and Harry have to get the king out of London, only to realise too late that they have been led into a trap. Barbara faces being deported back to the US. Last in the series.  
**10.00** BBC News.  
**10.20** Regional Programme.  
**10.30** **Match of the Day 2.** Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action, featuring Manchester City v Liverpool and Middlesbrough v Manchester United.  
**11.40** **American High School.** The school year draws to a close, but several seniors are at risk of failing. Jalena is given the responsibility of writing a speech for the graduation ceremony. Last in the series.  
**12.30** The Celebrity Apprentice USA.  
**1.55** Weather for the Week Ahead. **2.00** BBC News.

BBC2

**6.00** A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **6.45** An Island Parish. (R) **7.15** Around the World in 80 Gardens. (R) **8.15** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.45** Countryfile. (R) **9.45** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.15** Nigel Slater's Dish of the Day. (R) **11.45** Simply Nigella. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra.  
**1.00** **Film:** Day of the Evil Gun. (1968) Western, starring Glenn Ford. **2.30** The House That £100K Built. (R) **3.30** Back to the Land with Kate Humble. (R) **4.30** Ski Sunday Special: Freestyle Ski & Snowboard World Championships.  
**6.00** **Six Nations Rugby Union.** John Inverdale introduces highlights from the final round of matches in this year's championship, featuring Ireland v England, Scotland v Italy and France v Wales.  
**7.00** **Robot Wars.** Dara O Briain and Angela Scanlon present the third heat. Eight teams battle it out to win a single place in the grand final, pitting robots Foxic, Expulsion, Heavy Metal, MR Speed Squared, Thor, Tauron, Chimera 2 and Concussion against each other in the arena. The show begins with two group battles, followed by a head to head between the two overall winners.  
**8.00** **Top Gear.** Rory Reid and Sabine Schmitz go in search of the latest supercars at Germany's Nurburgring circuit, while Matt LeBlanc test drives the Aston Martin DB11, but finds Chris Harris and his Mercedes causing no end of trouble. Tamsin Greig takes to the Top Gear Test Track as this week's Star in a Reasonably Fast Car.  
**9.00** **Down the Mighty River with Steve Backshall.** Part two of two. The naturalist braves the dangerous white waters the Balium River's lower gorge and encounters a tribe that has had little contact with the outside world.  
**10.00** **Film: While We're Young.** (2014) Premiere. A middle-aged man and his wife have their lives turned upside down by their friendship with a younger couple. Comedy drama, starring Ben Stiller and Naomi Watts.  
**11.35** **Women's Six Nations Highlights.** Eishia Garbutt presents action from the concluding round of fixtures in this year's competition.  
**12.05** **Film:** Sergeant Rutledge. (1960) **1.50** Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **2.50** Holy City. (R) **3.50** This is BBC Two.

ITV

**6.00** CITY: Bottom Knocker Street. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.25** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Sooty. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.00** Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors. **8.20** Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.45** Scrambled!: Teen Titans Go! **9.05** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Countrywise: Guide to Britain. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **10.55** Wild Australia with Ray Mears. (R) **11.25** Chopping Block. (R) **12.25** ITV News: Weather. **12.30** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **1.30** Off Their Rockers. (R) **2.00** Tipping Point. (R) **3.00** The Voice UK. (R) **5.00** Little Big Shots. (R) **6.00** Regional Programme; Weather. **6.10** ITV News: Weather.  
**6.30** **Harry Hill's Alien Fun Capsule.** The comedian is joined by Mel Giedroyc, Bridget Christie, Eamonn Holmes and Judith Chalmers for the madcap panel show, in which the aim is to save Earth from an alien invasion. (R)  
**7.00** **Five Gold Rings.** Game show, hosted by Phillip Schofield, in which two friends take on a mother and son to identify images on an LED floor while viewers can play along using the series app.  
**8.00** **Vera.** New series. The detective investigates when the body of a wildlife ranger is found on a remote island. She seems to have been murdered, but was alone on the island when she died.  
**10.00** ITV News: Weather.  
**10.20** **The Nightly Show Best Bits.** Highlights of the second week of the entertainment show, with Davina McCall presenting a mix of topical monologues, studio games, celebrity guests, stand-up and video clips.  
**10.50** **Peston on Sunday.** Political magazine, presented by Robert Peston, with ITV News National Editor Allegra Stratton. (R)  
**11.50** **Anglo-Welsh Cup Highlights.** Action from the final at The Stoop, as Saracens or Leicester Tigers faced Exeter Chiefs or Harlequins. Saracens lifted the trophy when this tournament last took place in 2014/15.  
**12.40** Jackpot247. **3.00** The Cube. (R)

CHANNEL 4

**6.40** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.05** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.35** Race of Champions 2017. **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Simpsons. (R) **1.00** The Simpsons. (R) **1.30** Film: Rio. (2011) Animated comedy, with the voice of Jesse Eisenberg. **3.25** Film: Johnny English Reborn. (2011) **5.30** Channel 4 News.  
**6.00** **Dave's Guide to Spending Money.** Dave Fishwick explores whether products are worth the price the public is willing to pay for them. He creates his own range of bottled water, drawn from the tap, and tries to sell it to fashionable restaurants. He also sets up his own renewable power station in his back garden with the goal of generating enough electricity to run Burnley's Christmas lights for free.  
**7.00** **Our Guy in India.** Guy Martin takes a 1,000-mile journey across India to compete in a race called Rider Mania, the world's largest gathering of Royal Enfield motorbikes. In the first of two programmes, the daredevil rides with a 50-strong biker gang, visits Asia's biggest truck yard and finds himself completely out of his comfort zone. (R)  
**8.00** **Rivers with Jeremy Paxman.** The presenter travels along the Mersey from the heights of the Peak District to the estuary at Liverpool. He discovers its role in the development of Britain's modern industry and how it has recovered from years of pollution to become a haven for wildlife. He also goes electrofishing for brown trout, scales the river's tallest bridge and investigates the mysterious Mersey Mermaids.  
**9.00** **Homeland.** While Carrie and Saul present evidence to Keane, Quinn tracks a mark.  
**10.00** **Gogglebox.** Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV from the comfort of their own sofas. (R)  
**11.00** **8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown.** Jimmy Carr hosts the popular quiz as Sean Lock and David Mitchell compete against Jon Richardson and Katherine Ryan. The Brett Domino Trio help out in Dictionary Corner. (R)  
**12.00** **Film:** The Five-Year Engagement. (2012) **2.10** The Last Leg. (R) **3.05** Scruffs: Britain's Favourite Dog. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.10** Milkshake! Bop Box. (R) **6.15** Paw Patrol. (R) **6.25** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.40** Fireman Sam. (R) **6.50** Rupert Bear. (R) **7.00** Only the Little White Van. **7.05** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **7.15** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **7.30** Little Princess. (R) **7.45** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.00** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.25** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.40** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.00** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.25** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.35** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.45** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.30** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **11.00** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **12.00** The Gadget Show. (R) **1.05** Film: Batteries Not Included. (1987) Sci-fi fantasy, starring Jessica Tandy. **3.05** Film: Zathura: A Space Adventure. (2005) Family sci-fi adventure, starring Josh Hutcherson and Jonah Bobo. **5.00** Film: Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2. (2013) Animated comedy sequel, with the voice of Bill Hader.  
**6.50** **5 News Weekend.**  
**6.55** **Film: Left Behind.** (2014) The world is plunged into chaos when millions of people suddenly disappear. An airline pilot tries to save the remaining passengers on his flight, while on the ground, his daughter tries to find out if her mother and brother are among those who have vanished. Fantasy adventure based on the series of novels by Jerry B Jenkins and Tim LaHaye, starring Nicolas Cage and Lea Thompson. Edited for daytime broadcast.  
**9.00** **Film: Elysium.** (2013) In the future, most of the human race exists in poverty on a ruined Earth, while a wealthy elite live in luxury on an orbiting space station. A man dying of radiation poisoning fights security forces to gain access to the satellite and its medical facilities. Sci-fi thriller from the director of District 9, starring Matt Damon, Jodie Foster and Sharlto Copley. Includes 5 News Update at 10pm.  
**11.10** **Film: Dark Skies.** (2013) A suburban American home attracts the attention of alien invaders, who wage a campaign of terror against its residents. Sci-fi horror, starring Kerri Russell and Josh Hamilton.  
**12.55** Greatest Sci-Fi Movies. (R) **2.10** SuperCasino. **4.00** Criminals: Caught On Camera. (R) **4.50** House Doctor. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Four**  
**7.00** Revolution and Romance: Musical Masters of the 19th Century **8.00** Classic Quartets at the BBC **9.00** Heimat Home from Home: Chronicle of a Vision – Part One **10.40** Heimat Home from Home: Chronicle of a Vision – Part Two **12.10** The Century That Wrote Itself **1.40** How to Get Ahead: At Medieval Court **2.40** Classic Quartets at the BBC **3.40** Close **ITV2**  
**11.00** The Voice UK **1.00** 2Awesome **1.05** 2Awesome: Guidence **1.40** 2Awesome: Fame High **2.05** 2Awesome: Third Wheel **2.30** 2Awesome: LA Story **2.50** You've Been Framed! **Gold 3.55** Film: Despicable Me (2010) **4.55** FYI Daily **5.00** Film: Despicable Me (2010) **5.50** Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway **6.55** Film: Red Riding Hood (2011) **7.55** FYI Daily **8.00** Film: Red Riding Hood (2011) **9.00** Ibiza Weekender **10.00** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.30** The Cleveland Show **1.25** The Vampire Diaries **2.15** Teleshopping **5.45** ITV2 Nightscreen **ITV3**  
**11.45** Film: The Pure Hell of St Trinian's (1960) **12.45** FYI Daily **12.50** Film: The Pure Hell of St Trinian's (1960) **1.50** Inspector Morse **4.05** Agatha Christie's Marple **6.00** Midsomer Murders **8.00** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs **9.00** It'll Be Alright on the Night **10.00** Rising Damp Forever **11.05** Film: Good Will Hunting (1997) **12.05** FYI Daily **12.10** Film: Good Will Hunting (1997) **1.35** Inspector Morse **3.25** May the Best House Win **5.05** On the Buses **ITV4**  
**12.05** Film: All Quiet on the Western Front (1979) **1.05** FYI Daily **1.10** Film: All Quiet on the Western Front (1979) **3.10** Film: Bend of the River (1952) **4.10** FYI Daily **4.15** Film: Bend of the River (1952) **5.00** River Monsters **6.00** Fishing Impossible **7.00** The Big Fish Off **8.00** Anglo-Welsh Cup Highlights **9.05** Film: RoboCop 3 (1993) **10.10** FYI Daily **10.15** Film: RoboCop 3 (1993) **11.15** Film: Firefox (1982) **12.15** FYI Daily **12.20** Film: Firefox (1982) **2.00** The Football Mavericks **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **E4**  
**12.55** Made in Chelsea Does Come Dine with Me **2.00** Black-ish **2.30** The Goldbergs **4.00** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** Film: Addams Family Values (1993) **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00** Film: Die Hard 2 (1990) **12.25** Tattoo Fixers **1.30** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **2.30** Gap Year **3.15** Hollyoaks

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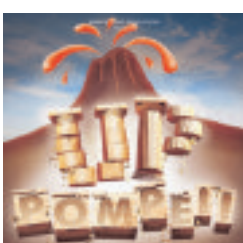
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FILM CHOICES

**MONDAY**  
**Homefront, Channel 5, 11pm**  
 A drug enforcement agent quits his job and relocates to a small town hoping to protect his daughter from the violent world he has to deal with. However, he is forced back into his old life when he finds his new home has a criminal underbelly dominated by a narcotics kingpin. Crime thriller, starring Jason Statham, James Franco and Winona Ryder. (2013)

**TUESDAY**  
**Locked Away, Channel 5, 3.15pm**  
 A pregnant teenager under pressure from her mother is unsure what to do about her baby, and turns to a high-school counsellor for advice. However, her confidante is secretly desperate to have a child of her own and plots to steal the infant as soon as it is born. Thriller, starring Jean Louisa Kelly. (2010)

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Deadly Departure, Channel 5, 3.15pm**  
 The family of FBI agent Sarah Plummer are taken hostage while she is on a flight to Washington DC. While on the flight, she meets a mysterious stranger seated beside her, and is forced to make a decision that could cost her the lives of her husband and 12-year-old son. Action, starring Dina Meyer. (2016)



Fury, Friday, Channel 5, 9pm

**THURSDAY**  
**Killer Obsession, Channel 5, 3.15pm**  
 A National Guard soldier returns from the frontline in Iraq and struggles to return to a normal life. To make matters worse, she finds herself blamed for a friendly fire incident in which two Americans were killed – and then she becomes the target of an obsessed fellow soldier seeking revenge for their deaths. Thriller, starring Roxanne McGee. (2016)

**FRIDAY**  
**Fury, Channel 5, 9pm**  
 A veteran American sergeant leads a tank crew on one final dangerous mission in the last months of the Second World War. The assignment takes the soldiers behind enemy lines and into battle with overwhelming enemy forces, while the presence of an inexperienced new recruit in the team raises tension. Drama, starring Brad Pitt and Shia LaBeouf. (2014)

# Comedy duo take in the sights and sounds of Budapest

The schedules are full of celebrities travelling the world and telling us all how great a certain holiday destination is.

What makes Travel Man different is that instead of us watching someone having a ball during a holiday of a lifetime, we instead sometimes get the impression that Richard Ayoade is going through a terrible time – and that makes it much more satisfying for those of us stuck at home.

Okay, many of the film director and star of The IT Crowd's gripes are probably exaggerated for the cameras, but it is nevertheless good fun watching Richard and his pals from the world of comedy effectively scouring the globe in search of the next tourist disappointment.

Tonight, Richard is joined by Irish comedian, actor and writer Aisling Bea.

Aisling won The Gilded Balloon's So You Think You're Funny award at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2012 and is a regular guest on panel shows, including 8 Out of 10

Cats, Never Mind the Buzzcocks, Would I Lie to You? and QI, so she will certainly give Richard a run for his money in the comedy one-liner stakes.

Their destination is Budapest, a city with miles of old-world charm.

The Hungarian capital is paradise for explorers, so you'd think Richard and Aisling would find something there to tickle their fancy during their whistlestop tour.

The cynical pair spend two days in the city with the aim of taking in as many of its sights as possible, as well as passing on a few money-saving tips to viewers at home.

Culinary highlights in the fairytale city on the Danube include a steaming hot bowl of goulash – a traditional Hungarian soup or stew of meat and vegetables, seasoned with paprika and other spices.

They also visit a 'ruin pub' for a taste of unicum, a herbal liquor which is regarded as one of the national drinks of Hungary and usually drunk as a digestif and aperitif.

Budapest sits on a patchwork of almost 125 thermal springs – more than any other capital city in the world – and 'taking the waters' has been a part of life here since people walked in togas during Roman times and the Turkish occupation.

The duo take the opportunity to visit one of these baths where they play a game of chess. Next it's onto the Zugliget chairlift, an alternative means of transport high in the Buda Hills.

The duo take a ride on the cable-suspended conveyance which takes riders up the side of János Hill and provides them with an amazing view of Budapest.

And finally they visit a statue of Columbo star Peter Falk in Falk Miksa Street.

Richard and Aisling read how there is still somewhat of a mystery surrounding this life-sized bronze reproduction of the actor, with theories suggesting it was commissioned in 2014 due to a tenuous familial connection, three years after Falk's passing.



Travel Man: 48 Hours in Budapest, Monday, Channel 4, 8.30pm

## BEST OF THE REST

**MONDAY**  
**Puerto Rico – Island of Enchantment: Natural World**  
**BBC2, 9pm**

The small Caribbean Puerto Rico of Puerto Rico is nicknamed the Island of Enchantment because of its beautiful beaches, amazing ambience and landmarks. Despite being only 3,515 square miles in area, it is also home to a vast array of exotic wildlife. However, many of these species are also vulnerable and countless have been pushed to the brink of extinction by human encroachment, while 95 per cent of its rainforests have been destroyed. This film, narrated by David Attenborough, profiles three conservation champions who are making it their mission to save some of the island's the most precious species, namely manatees, of which only 700 remain in the wild; parrots, of which there were only 13 left at one point; and the five native species of oceanic turtle.

**TUESDAY**  
**Back to the Land with Kate Humble**  
**BBC2, 8pm**

The presenter follows innovative businesses in the Lake District through Spring, Summer and Autumn, painting portrait of the rugged landscape and gaining an insight the challenges they face. Kate Humble

helps with lambing at a fifth generation farm who have invented the world's only wool compost, so they can keep their farming traditions alive. She also goes foraging for wild food, which went to waste until one woman realised she could turn it into unique jams and preserves that are now sold nationwide

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Live International Football**  
**ITV, 7.15pm**

Germany v England. Mark Pougatch presents action from the friendly international at Signal Iduna Park in Dortmund, where England were looking to repeat last year's outstanding victory against the hosts. While the result of this match remains of some importance, the main use of the exercise for Gareth Southgate is to prepare his squad for Sunday's World Cup qualifier against Lithuania.

**THURSDAY**  
**Great British Buildings: Restoration of the Year**  
**Channel 4, 8pm**

As the host of Grand Designs, Kevin McCloud knows a thing or two about the work involved in restoring a historic building. So

he's the perfect person to co-present this new series which showcases some of the treasured buildings that have been brought back from the brink thanks to the dedication and craft skills of those involved. All of the projects have been placed on the long list by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) for their Restoration of the Year award, and in this opening edition, Kevin and Dr Anna Keay check out some of the contenders.

**FRIDAY**  
**Red Nose Day 2017**  
**BBC1, 7pm**

It's that time again when comedians and celebrities come together to have a laugh in a very good cause.

Lenny Henry, Jonathan Ross, Sally Phillips, Rob Beckett, Romesh Ranganathan, Warwick Davis and Miranda Hart are among the presenters who'll be taking to East



Red Nose Day 2017, Friday, BBC1, 7pm

London's O2 stages for a night of fundraising fun and games. However, arguably the most eagerly anticipated part of the proceedings is Red Nose Day Actually, which sees writer and director Richard Curtis catching up with the characters from Love Actually to find out what they are up to 14 years on. Presumably Hugh Grant's Prime Minister isn't still in Number 10, but did he find lasting love with Martine McCutcheon's tea lady? Here's our chance to find out as Keira Knightley, Colin Firth, Liam Neeson, Bill Nighy, Andrew Lincoln, Chiwetel Ejiofor and Rowan Atkinson also return for the sequel.

**Unreported World**  
**Channel 4, 7.30pm**

Marcel Theroux explores the resurgent Russian Orthodox Church, which is at the forefront of a new movement combining religion and nationalism in its home nation. Until the fall of the Soviet Union, the Church had been persecuted by the communists, but has now forged close ties with President Vladimir Putin. Theroux meets Alexander Dugin, referred to as 'Putin's brain', whose ideas have cropped up in the president's speeches, and Fr Ioann Osyak, patriarch of a family whose members are becoming national celebrities and symbols of today's Russia – religious, conservative and deeply patriotic.

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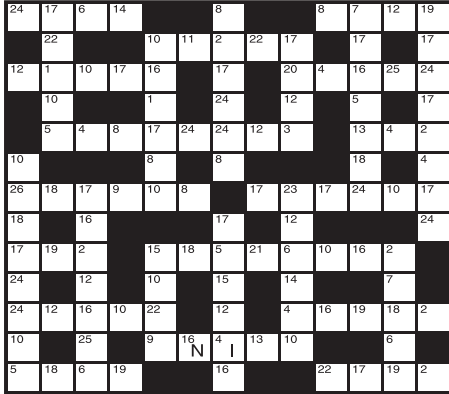


# BRAIN GYM

No.421

## Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	M	Q	W	Z	F	K	U	A	S	B	J	R	H
14	N	X	I	Y	L	G	C	T	V	E	O	D	P

## Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

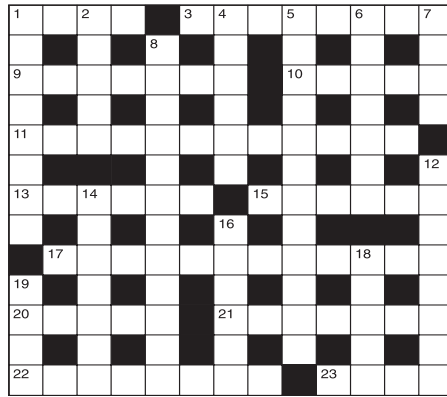
### Cryptic Clues:

#### Across

- The flower grew (4)
- Getting a taste of palm mixture to sing about (8)
- 100 join mad craftsman in idle talk (7)
- Brown as pie (5)
- Where the little learning can be found (6,6)
- Draw out note that is legal (6)
- Threaten one politician with death (6)
- Wish joy to uncle at rag (12)
- Some are afraid a horse could get into their state (5)
- Cultivation up to being old (7)
- Giving rein to fancies of mad reign (8)
- The direction in which things are wrecked (4)

#### Down

- He gets the message, no doubt (8)
- Employees one should be about to lean on (5)
- Stop the others after half a year (6)
- Somehow shut my pools, about 2nd June - after I've gone (12)
- Get better, as I am to show without doubt (7)
- Happy boy has good head on him (4)
- Place found for a candidate? (8,4)
- Supporter heard ten out (8)
- Put in quarantine one who is overdue by such a margin (7)
- The box is not put upside down on the vehicle (6)
- Lower a foundation (5)
- Rear deer (4)



### Quick Clues:

#### Across

- Throw (4)
- Stately (8)
- Funeral-goer (7)
- Part of a flower (5)
- Prodigality (12)
- Separate (6)
- Incentive (6)
- Conference (12)
- Aspect (5)
- Brave (7)
- Being (8)
- Carry (4)

#### Down

- Praises (8)
- Gush (5)
- Aviator (6)
- Rapturously (12)
- Representative (7)
- Young horse (4)
- White-hot (12)
- Miss (8)
- Infringe (7)
- Brainy (6)
- Angry (5)
- Heroic (4)

## Sudoku

6			1	5			3	
	9			8			7	2
	4	7			6			
4				7		1		
		8		9		2		
	7		5		8			4
		6				9		
3	5			4			8	
	4		8	7	6			3

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

9	3	2	8	5	1	4	7	6
5	1	7	6	3	4	9	2	8
8	4	6	7	9	2	5	3	1
3	9	5	2	4	8	1	6	7
1	7	8	5	6	3	2	9	4
6	2	4	1	7	9	8	5	3
2	5	1	3	8	7	6	4	9
7	6	9	4	1	5	3	8	2
4	8	3	9	2	6	7	1	5

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:  
CRYPTIC - Across: 6 Recount; 7 Apron; 9 Music; 10 Keyhole; 12 Shoplifting; 14 Meaning look; 18 Mumbled; 19 Stick; 21 Heads; 22 Or tails. Down: 1 Debut; 2 Polish; 3 Ant; 4 Upshot; 5 Gosling; 8 Denials; 11 Spanner; 13 Deputed; 15 Nobody; 16 Outlay; 17 Scale; 20 Fry. QUICK - Across: 6 Revenue; 7 Speed; 9 Train; 10 Quieten; 12 Demonstrate; 14 Obstruction; 18 Release; 19 Strew; 21 Acid; 22 Deserve. Down: 1 Merry; 2 Recipe; 3 Put; 4 Appear; 5 Beneath; 8 Pulsate; 11 Roguish; 13 Absence; 15 Thesis; 16 Outset; 17 Leave; 20 Hew.

## Quiz

- Who succeeded John Gregory as manager of Aston Villa?
- Who wrote Whisky Galore?
- Which country was Britain's main ally in the Seven Years' War?
- To which family of fish does the minnow belong?
- Which former England captain has managed Spurs, QPR and Bristol Rovers?
- Which US city is named after a chairman of the United States Steel Corporation?
- What is a kora?
- Which dog is named after the German for 'badger-dog'?
- What is the capital of Italy's Tuscany region?
- What nationality was playwright and novelist August Strindberg?

### Last week's solutions:

- Quiz: 1 Soprano; 2 Sarah Hogg; 3 1965; 4 DW Griffith; 5 Prince Andrew; 6 Dutch; 7 Jean-Paul Sartre; 8 London and Venice; 9 Tim Rice; 10 The Longships.

### Niner: REACTIONS

## Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

132359  
636879  
476679

gives a French port,  
gives a second French port,  
gives a French city.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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# Make a night of it

Soul sister – enjoy a night in the city before Emeli's gig



Emeli Sandé will be singing her heart out at The O2 Academy in Birmingham on Sunday. Here at The Ticket, we wonder where the Scottish songstress would go to eat, drink and be merry on a night out before a gig. Read All About It. . .

## MAKING A MEAL



The Mailbox is the place to go for a meal before you don your dancing shoes. There's oodles of places to choose from, so if you fancy a quick bite to eat there are burgers, pizzas or even tapas on the menu. There are also pubs and bars if you just want to grab a beer or vino before you see the gig. If you prefer something more decadent than Marco Pierre White's restaurant at The Cube is top of the list. Fine dining with glorious views over the city will make this a real night to remember. We reckon Emeli would love a slap-up dinner there.

## THREE CHEERS



Pre-gig drinks are a must on a night out so why not head to a place full of heart and soul? The Island Bar is a stone's throw from the O2 on Suffolk Street, Queensway, and is a tropical paradise offering loads of cocktails including a Mint Choc Martini laced with vodka and chocolate mint liqueur. If you're stopping in the city overnight after the gig, Quarter Horse coffee shop on Bristol Street serves a scrumptious breakfast. Think sour dough toast or cakes and pastries washed down with incredible coffee. Sounds like Heaven.

## SLEEP IT OFF



### POSH PAD

Lie Next To Me at the four-star Malmaison hotel in the Mailbox. Here you can enjoy food, drink and sleep in uber stylish surrounds: think modern and moody, sultry and slick. There's a brasserie and a bar so you can have dinner and drinks before you head to the show. There's a vibrant atmosphere so it'll certainly get you in the mood. Why not make a weekend of it as there's also a spa if you want to kick back, relax and indulge? There are rooms and suites available. We love the look of the super quirky Nirvana suite (pictured above) which screams colourful and punky. It even has a mirrored Jacuzzi, perfect for bubbles in bubbles! Prices vary but can be as little as £75 depending on the date.

### DISCOUNT DOZE

If you need to watch your bank balance and require a cheap sleep, head to The Comfort Inn, Station Street. It's only a 10-minute walk from the venue so a quick and easy stopover after a big night. The rooms are basic but comfy enough for you to rest your weary head and tired tootsies. The best bit is that it won't cost much leaving you some spare change to download loads of Emeli's music.

## GET THERE

It's easy peasy as it's on the main drag into the city making it accessible by train, car or bus. Catch the train and head to Birmingham New Street and the O2's only a 10-minute walk from the station. By bus it's a case of hopping off at the nearest stop to the venue. Or by car there are loads of places park up. If you don't want to spend a fortune on fees then you could park further out of the city centre and walk/bus/train in to the city.

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Departing Saturday 10 June 2017

Quote Code: ETJ748

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### Price Includes...

- ✓ Overnight stay at a 3 or 4 star Yorkshire area hotel with 3-course dinner and full English breakfast
- ✓ Admission to the RHS Chatsworth Flower Show
- ✓ Free time in Harrogate

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# PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY  
GUIDE TO HOME  
BUYING AND  
LETTING

27  
The Chronicle Thursday, March 16, 2017

## Well-presented two-bedroomed semi-detached

**This well-presented two-bedroomed semi-detached house in Rogers Close, Ashmore Park, comes with front and rear gardens and lies in a pleasant cul de sac location.**

With double glazing and gas central heating, it is for sale through Redstones at £120,000 with no chain.

The property's accommodation briefly comprises an entrance porch, a reception hall, a through lounge, a conservatory, a fitted kitchen, two double bedrooms, a family bathroom, a side entry and front and rear gardens.

In more detail the entrance porch has a glazed front door and windows, power and light and leads into the reception hall.

This has stairs off to the first floor and doors leading to the lounge and kitchen.

The lounge has a window to the front, patio doors leading out to the conservatory and a feature fireplace with a gas fire.

With power and light, the conservatory has a door leading out to the rear garden.

With matching wall, base and drawer units, the fitted kitchen has tiled surrounds, a stainless steel sink and drawer with roll top work surfaces, plumbing and appliance space, a four-ring gas hob and electric oven, extractor hood, display cabinets, an under-stairs cupboard and a door to the side covered entry leading to a storage outbuilding.

On the first floor of this property, bedroom one has a window to the front. Bedroom two overlooks the rear and has a storage cupboard.

The family bathroom is positioned to the rear. It has a panelled bath with an electric 'Triton' shower over, pedestal wash hand basin, tiled surrounds and a low level WC.

Outside, to the front there is a block paved garden with borders with a wide range of plants and shrubs and a door to the side covered entry.

To the rear there is a lawned garden with a paved patio, flower beds and cold water tap.

ASHMORE PARK £120,000



### TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Redstones

TEL: 01922 235 350

EMAIL: [info@redstones.co.uk](mailto:info@redstones.co.uk)

### KEY FEATURES

2 bedrooms

Semi-detached

No chain

Gardens

Pleasant location



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Turn to your local estate agent to sell your property and you will be **SOLD ON:**

- Professional accredited local agent service
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- Adverts in local newspapers, online and office window display
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If you are thinking of selling, look no further than the estate agents in these pages for the best local advice available.





## End terrace is ideal for first-time buyer

WILLENHALL

£94,995

This superbly presented and recently renovated two-bedroomed end terrace property in Temple Road, Willenhall, is for sale through L&S Prestige Estates at £94,995.

Its nicely proportioned living accommodation comprises of a lounge, a separate dining room with an open plan access into a modern fitted kitchen, a ground floor bathroom and two double bedrooms on the first floor. The property also benefits from double glazing and gas central heating throughout. Outside there is a small paved garden to the fore and generous yard to the rear. The property is also superbly situated for access to a wide range of



## Home with four bedrooms and established

BLOXWICH

£375,000

<<<

This splendidly appointed detached family residence off Stafford Road in Stoney Lane, Bloxwich, Walsall, comes with four generous bedrooms.

It is for sale through Skitts at £375,000.

Its accommodation also includes three reception rooms, a study room and a utility cupboard, a concrete print driveway with parking for many vehicles and an established rear garden.

It also has gas central heating and UPVC double glazed windows.

The selling agents are expecting a lot of interest to be shown in this delightful and highly attractive property, and so are urging interested parties to book a viewing fast.



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79 Sharon Way, Hednesford	11.00am	11.00am
103 Stafford Street, Heath Hayes	11.30am	11.30am
Land to rear 167 High Street, Chase Terrace	12.00pm	12.00pm
75 High Street, Cheslyn Hay	12.45pm	12.45pm
Land to rear of 19 Watling Street, Churchbridge	By attending on site with Catalogue to hand	
Land Adj 9 Whitgreave Lane, Rugeley		

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**LAND ADJACENT TO 9 WHITGREAVE LANE, RUGELEY, WS15 1NG**  
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION  
◆ Residential Freehold building land  
◆ With outline planning permission for 2No three bedroomed dwellings  
◆ Area 380m² or thereabouts  
**GUIDE PRICE £80,000 to £100,000**

**LOT 6**  
**103 STAFFORD STREET, HEATH HAYES, WS12 2EN**  
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION  
◆ Semi detached house  
◆ In need of refurbishment  
◆ Three bedrooms  
◆ Gas fired central heating  
◆ All windows double glazed  
◆ EPC rating E (52)  
**GUIDE PRICE £120,000+**

**LOT 1**  
**LAND REAR OF 19 WATLING STREET, CHURCHBRIDGE, CANNOCK, WS11 3JY**  
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION  
◆ Freehold residential building land with benefit for two schemes  
◆ Scheme 1 - Four 2 bedroom semi detached house  
◆ Scheme 2 - Four 2 bedroom detached bungalows  
◆ Convenient for facilities locally and at Cannock Town Centre  
**GUIDE PRICE £200,000-250,000**

**LOT 2**  
**39 ABBEY STREET, HEDNESFORD, WS12 4BB**  
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION  
◆ Detached bungalow in popular residential area  
◆ Standing on relatively deep plot  
◆ In need to some improvement  
◆ Predominantly double glazed  
◆ Gas fired central heating  
◆ EPC rating F (35)  
**GUIDE PRICE £100,000+**

**LOT 3**  
**75 HIGH STREET, CHESLYN HAY, WS6 7AD**  
FREEHOLD INVESTMENT WITH PART VACANT POSSESSION  
◆ Currently producing £10,300 P.A. but capable of £19,900 P.A. when fully let  
◆ Prominently located mixed residential/commercial investment  
◆ Two ground floor lock up shops  
◆ 3 Self contained flats  
**GUIDE PRICE £175,000+**

**LOT 4**  
**79 SHARON WAY, HEDNESFORD, WS12 2NN**  
LEASEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION  
◆ Semi detached house in need of renovation  
◆ Lounge & dining room  
◆ Kitchen  
◆ Three bedrooms  
◆ Bathroom  
◆ Part double glazed  
◆ EPC rating F (21)  
**GUIDE PRICE £70,000 - £80,000**

**LOT 7**  
**BUILDING LAND REAR OF 167 HIGH STREET, CHASETOWN, WS7 3XL**  
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION  
◆ Freehold parcel of building land  
◆ Having planning permission for the erection of three pairs of 3 bedroom semi detached houses  
◆ Site area - 0.49 acre of therabouts  
**GUIDE PRICE £300,000+**



## One-bedroom

A one-bedroomed first floor apartment in Friary Crescent, Walsall, comes with a large enclosed communal garden.

It is for sale through Webbs at £70,000.

The property is close to local transport routes giving easy access to Birmingham, Walsall and other surrounding towns.

WALSALL

£70,000

In brief, its accommodation comprises a secure entry door leading into the communal hallway leading to the front door, an entrance hallway, kitchen, bathroom, double bedroom and spacious lounge.

Outside, the property has a large enclosed communal garden and viewing is essential to appreciate the location and overall size of the property on offer.

For further information, contact Webbs on 01922 663399 or visit [www.webbsstateagents.co.uk](http://www.webbsstateagents.co.uk)





**Walsall**

**01922 711444**

7 Queens Parade, Walsall, WS3 2EX



**Vernon Way, Vernon Way**

- Two/Three Bedroom Detached Bungalow
- Two Reception Rooms
- Fully Fitted Kitchen
- Ground Floor Bathroom
- Master Bedroom with en-suite
- Ample Off Road Parking
- Located near M6 Motorway
- Viewings are highly recommended
- Rating: 46
- Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers

**£725.00 PCM**



**Kinnerley Street, Walsall,**

- Three Bedroom Detached
- Modern Fitted Kitchen
- Two Double Bedrooms and Single
- Gas Central Heating
- Viewings are highly recommended
- Located near M6 Motorway
- Main Bus Routes into Birmingham City
- On Road Parking
- Rating: 34
- Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers.

**Monthly Rental of £695.00 PCM**



**Broadway, Walsall**

- Three Bedroom Apartment
- New Build
- Communal Hallway with Lift
- Lounge with Balcony
- Fitted Kitchen Area
- Rating: 85

**£695.00 PCM**



**Loriners Grove, Walsall,**

**LET!**

- Quiet and Private Location
- Gated Entrance
- Spacious Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- Two Bathrooms
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- Rating: 78

**£625.00 PCM**



**Clockmill Road, Pelsall,**

**LET!**

- Two Bedroom Terraced
- Spacious Hallway
- Through Lounge
- Modern Fitted Kitchen
- Immaculate Rear Garden
- Double Glazing
- Sorry No DHSS
- Rating: 59

**£595.00 PCM**



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**LET!**

**Cheniston Road, Willenhall,**

- Three Bedroom Semi-Detached
- Entrance Hall
- Through Lounge/Diner
- Fitted Kitchen
- Separate Utility
- Rating: 85

**£650.00 PCM**



**Cavendish Gardens, Walsall,**

- Spacious First Floor Flat
- Large Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- Modern Bathroom
- Communal Gardens
- Gas Central Heating
- Rating: 79
- Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers

**Monthly Rental of £525.00 PCM**



**Terret Close, Walsall**

- Two Bedroom Apartment
- Town Centre Location
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- En-suite
- Security Entrance Gates
- Rating: 54
- Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers

**Monthly Rental Of £525 PCM**



**LET!**

**Broadway, Walsall**

- Two Bedroom Apartment
- New Build
- Communal Hallway with Lift
- Kitchen/Lounge
- Family Bathroom
- Rating: 72

**£595.00 PCM**



**Ravenscroft Road, Willenhall**

**LET!**

- Two Bedroom Terrace
- Popular Pool Hayes Estate
- Entrance Hall
- Through Lounge
- Kitchen
- Side Entrance/Utility
- Bathroom Walk in Shower
- Rating: 89

**Monthly Rental Of £550.00 PCM**



**Revival Street, Bloxwich,**

- Two Bedroom Mid Terrace
- Bloxwich High Street
- Two Reception Rooms
- Kitchen
- Ground Floor Bathroom
- Rating: TBC

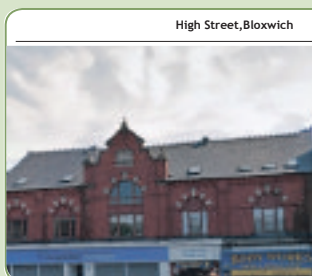
**£450.00 PCM**



**Bloxwich Road, Walsall**

- AVAILABLE MARCH 2017
- Fully Refurbished
- Private Entrance
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Newly Fitted Kitchen
- Newly Fitted Shower Room
- Rating: TBC
- DHSS Accepted, Sorry No Pets

**Monthly Rental Of £475 PCM**



**High Street, Bloxwich**

- One bedroom Flat over Retail Premises
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- Large Bathroom
- Electric Heating
- Large Lounge
- Rating: TBC
- DHSS Accepted

**Monthly Rental Of £400.00**



**Usk Close, Bloxwich**

**LET!**

- One Bedroom Ground Floor Flat
- Self Contained
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- Bathroom with Shower
- Allocated Parking Space
- Private Entrance
- Rating: 82

**£400.00 PCM**

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**NEW**

**BLOXWICH**  
WOODCROFT COURT




- Modern First Floor
- 100% SHARE
- Entrance Hallway
- Lounge
- Double Bedroom
- Bathroom
- Communal Grounds
- Parking

**\$80,000 OFFERS OVER**

**NEW**

**WALSALL**  
KELVIN PLACE




- Deceptively Spacious
- Through Hallway
- Lounge
- Dining Room
- Kitchen Utility
- Attic Room
- Conservatory
- NO CHAIN

**\$109,950**

**NEW**

**CHESLYN HAY**  
THE HOLLIES






- Outstanding Detached
- 3 Reception Rooms
- Conservatory
- Utility Room, WC
- 4 Double Bedrooms
- Family Bathroom
- En-Suite
- Double Garage
- Driveway

**\$385,000**

**WALSALL**  
HARVEST GROVE




- 4 Bed Stunning Home
- Through Hallway
- Lounge, WC
- Kitchen/diner
- Conservatory
- Bathroom
- Dressing Room, En-Suite
- Garage, Driveway

**OFFERS OVER \$210,000**

**NEW**

**BLOXWICH**  
PENDEREL STREET



- Extended Semi
- Kitchen
- Hallway
- Lounge
- Dining Room
- Utility Room, WC
- 4 Bedrooms
- Driveway, Garage

**\$139,950**

**BLOXWICH**  
STONEY LANE





- Impressive
- 2 Reception Rooms
- Kitchen
- Family Room
- 4/5 Bedrooms
- Double Garage
- Enclosed

**\$355,000**

**NEW**

**GREAT WYRLEY**  
WALSALL ROAD






- Spacious Family Home
- Versatile Accommodation
- Generous Bedrooms
- Lounge, Dining Room
- Fabulous Kitchen/diner
- 4 Bedrooms
- Spacious Bathroom
- Rear Garden

**\$260,000 OFFERS OVER**

**NEW**

**BLOXWICH**  
VALLEY ROAD

- Semi Detached
- Hallway
- Lounge
- Kitchen/Diner
- 3 Bedrooms
- Generous Garden
- Garage
- No Chain

**\$112,500**

**REDUCED**

**NEWTOWN**  
STAFFORD ROAD






- Traditional Family Home
- Guests WC, Conservatory
- 2 Reception Rooms
- Refitted Kitchen
- 3 Bedrooms
- Shower Room, En-Suite
- Landscaped Gardens
- Garage & Driveway
- NO CHAIN

**OFFERS OVER \$350,000**

**NEW**

**CHESLYN HAY**  
LITTLEWOOD LANE




- Refurbished Family Home
- Guests WC
- Lounge
- Kitchen/Diner
- Bathroom
- 4 Bedrooms, 2 En-Suites
- Gardens
- Private Driveway

**\$295,000**

**WALSALL**  
EAGLEWORKS



- Ground Floor
- Hallway
- Lounge
- Kitchen
- 2 Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Parking
- Viewing

**\$44,950 40% Shared**

**NEW**

**LITTLE BLOXWICH**  
BAKEWELL CLOSE



**SSTC  
Similar Required**

- Extended Home
- Through Hallway
- Guest WC
- Lounge
- Breakfast Kitchen
- Utility
- 3 Bedrooms
- Refitted

**\$134,950**

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## Estate House, Darwall Street, Walsall WS1 1DA

**0121 289 3838**

## Auction

Monday 3rd  
April 2017  
at 6.00pm Precisely

Banks's Stadium, Walsall  
Football Club, Bescot  
Crescent, Walsall, WS1 4SA

LOT 1

### Wednesbury Road Walsall

20th March 10:45am, 25th March 10:45am



●Guide Price £64,000 PLUS

This two bedroom terraced property is situated in a popular residential area a short distance from Walsall Town Centre. The property is in need of complete modernisation and improvement. With all amenities close at hand this property is ideally suited towards an investor. Ground Floor Front reception room (3.6m x 3.6m), Rear reception Room with access to cellar (3.6m x 3.6m), Kitchen with rear door providing access to garden (3.8m x 2m), Bathroom (2.6m x 2m) First Floor Bedroom one with window to front (3.6m x 3.6m), Bedroom two with window to rear (3.6m x 3.6), Box Room (3.5m x 1.1m) Outside At the rear of the property there is an overgrown garden.

LOT 2

### Derwent Close Willenhall

20th March 12pm, 25th March 12pm



●Guide Price £115,000 PLUS

Situated in a popular residential area this three bedroom semi detached property is in need of modernisation. The property is ideally suited to either a first time buyer or investor. With all amenities close at hand the property comprises: Ground Floor, Front door leads to entrance W.C. and Lounge (7.2m x 4.6m), Kitchen with rear door providing access to garden and garage, (3m x 2.1m) First Floor, Bedroom one with windows overlooking the front of the property (3.5m x 2.5m), Bedroom two with windows to front (2.7m x 2m), Bedroom three with windows overlooking the rear garden (3.6m x 2.7m) Bathroom (1.9m x 1.1m). Outside, At front of the property there is a driveway giving access to the front door and garage

LOT 3

### Sandwell Street Walsall

20th, 25th March 10:15am



●Guide Price £75,000 PLUS

This two bedroom terraced property is in need of modernisation. The property is situated a short distance from Walsall town centre and the A34 which offers a direct transport link into Birmingham. This property is ideally suited towards investors and with all amenities close at hand it comprises: Ground Floor Lounge (3.6m x 3.6m), Reception Room (3.6m x 3.6m), Kitchen (3.2m x 1.5m), Bathroom (2.1m x 1.4m) First Floor Bedroom one with window to front (4.1m x 3.6m), Bedroom two (4.1m x 3.6m) Outside At the rear of the property there is a small yard.

LOT 4

### Land, Hen Lane Coventry

By appointment through Auctioneers



●Guide Price £350,000 PLUS

This Freehold development site which amounts to approx 0.5 of an acre is offered with Planning (subject to conditions) Coventry City Council Application No: FUL/2014/1180 for erection of 8 residential dwellings. Situated between Winding House Lane, Hen Lane and Orpington Drive, adjacent to the A444 Phoenix Way island, opposite the Ricoh Arena, the site offers an ideal opportunity for a small to medium size developer. The proposed development includes 4 detached properties of approximately 90 sq metres (968 sq ft) each and 4 semi detached properties at approx 77 sq metres (828 sq ft). Tenure: Freehold

LOT 5

### Building to the rear of, 9-11 Station Road Erdington

By appointment through Auctioneers



●Guide Price £80,000 PLUS

Situated to the rear of 9-11 High Street, Erdington, accessed via a shared vehicular driveway, occupying a convenient location, this multi use building lends itself to a number of uses. Set over two floors, the property provides good storage space or warehousing as well as office space and access for housing of a vehicle. All uses are subject to confirmation of necessary planning approval and regulations. Ground Floor Roller Shutter to store space (9.6m x 2.79m), Back Office (7.8m x 4.6m), Office 1 (5.2m x 3.4m), Office 2 (2.3m x 3.5m), Office 3 (3.7m x 2.4m), Office 4 (9.7m x 3.8m), Kitchen with Worcester gas central heating (2.45m x 2.48m). First Floor Office 5 (13.4m x 3.7m), Office 6 (4.5m x 4.5m) Buyers Premium A Buyers Premium of £900.00 inc v.a.t. will be charged.

LOT 5a

### Land, Rudge Close Willenhall

Viewings: This site is open to viewings



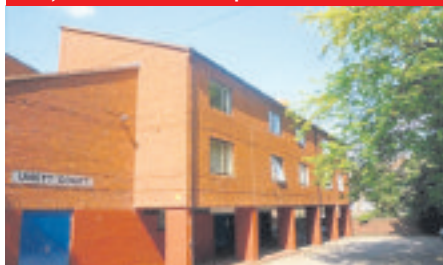
●Guide Price £150,000 PLUS

Residential building plot with Planning Permission (subject to conditions) Application No 14/0650/PL. Situated on a popular residential development for the erection of six 2 bedroom houses and two 3 bedroom houses. Planning: Subject to obtaining the necessary planning consents the land may be considered suitable for residential redevelopment. The proposed dwellings would need to be sited with care to avoid overlooking adjoining dwellings. The existing access is not capable of adoption. Services: Mains services are understood to be available in the vicinity of the property, but prospective purchasers should make their own independent enquiries as to the suitability of services for their particular requirements. Ground Conditions &

LOT 6

### Unett Court, St. Matthews Road Smethwick

21st, 27th March and 3rd April at 11am



●Guide Price £25,000 PLUS

This one bedroom ground floor flat is in need of modernisation. The flat is situated in a popular residential area within Smethwick and is within walking distance of multiple schools and Windmill shopping centre. Ideally suited towards an investor and with all amenities close at hand this flat comprises: Tenure Leasehold Ground Floor Lounge with window and door to rear (5m x 2.7m), Kitchen (2.5m x 1.5m), Bedroom (3.7m x 2.2m), Bathroom (2.7m x 1.5m). Outside The flat has gated parking. Tenure Leasehold, 125 years from 01/01/2007

LOT 7

### Sandwell Street Walsall

20th, 25th, 31st March all at 9.45 am



●Guide Price £137,500 PLUS

This three bedroom detached property is in need of modernisation. The property is situated in a popular residential area and is within walking distance of multiple schools. This makes the property ideally suited towards both home owners as well as investors. Tenure Freehold. Ground Floor, Front door leads to dining room (3.4m x 3m), Lounge (4.5m x 3.3m), Kitchen with door to lean to (3.2m x 2.8m) First Floor, Landing Leads to bedroom one (3.6m x 3m), bedroom two (3.3m x 2.8m), Bedroom three, Bathroom (3.4m x 2m). Outside At the front of the property there is a pathway leading to the front door and at the rear there is a small garden.

LOT 8

### Land Rear of, 57-59 Waverley Street Worcester

The site is open for inspection



●Guide Price £75,000 PLUS

Situated in a popular residential area of Worcester within a short distance of the City Centre this Freehold Building Plot is offered for sale with Planning Permission (subject to conditions) Application No: PD16D0468 - Worcester City Council. Although the land is rear of 57-59 Waverley Street, the site fronts Cavendish Street adjacent to 102 Cavendish Street and represents a 3 storey detached dwelling comprising: Living Room, Entrance Hall, Guest Cloakroom, Kitchen at ground floor level. Master Bedroom with En-Suite and additional Bedroom and Bathroom at first floor level and Bedroom three at second floor level. Full Planning and supporting documentation can be found on the Worcester City Council Planning Website. Tenure Freehold

LOT 9

### Borrowdale Road Birmingham

17th, 24th, 31st March at 3pm



This three bedroom terraced property is in need of modernisation. The property is situated in a popular residential area and is within walking distance of Merrits Brook Primary School. With all amenities close at hand.

●Guide Price £80,000 PLUS

LOT 10

### Park Hall Road Walsall

17th, 24th, 31st March at 11am



●Guide Price £350,000 PLUS

Situated in a popular residential area this three bedroom detached dormer bungalow is set on a generous corner plot. The property is within walking distance from Park Hall school and a short drive from Walsall town centre. The property is in need of modernisation and with all amenities close at hand it comprises: Ground Floor Lounge (8.3m x 3.7m), Conservatory (4.1m x 2.3m), Shower Room (3m x 2m), Kitchen (3.9m x 2.2m), Bedroom One (3.8m x 3m), Bedroom Two (3.9m x 3m), Shower Room 2, Garage (10m x 2.8m) First Floor Bedroom Three (6.9m x 3.5m) Outside At the front of the property there is a large driveway as well as a garden. At the rear of the property there is a well maintained garden.

LOT 11

### Alumwell Road Walsall

20th, 25th March 11:15am



Situated in a popular residential area this three bedroom semi detached property is in need of modernisation. The property is located a short drive from both Walsall town centre and Junction 10 which provides popular transport links to both Birmingham and Wolverhampton. With all amenities close at hand. Tenure Freehold

●Guide Price £80,000 PLUS

●Guides are provided as an indication of each seller's minimum expectation. They are not necessarily figures which a property will sell for and may change at any time prior to the auction. Each property will be offered subject to a Reserve (a figure below which the Auctioneer cannot sell the property during the auction) which we expect will be set within the Guide Range or no more than 10% above a single figure Guide





## Deceptively spacious three-bedroom house

WILLENHALL

£145,000

Being extended and deceptively spacious, this mid town house in Woodside Way, Willenhall, lies in a desirable area just off Wood Lane.

It is for sale through Goodchilds at £145,000 with no chain. A spacious three-bedroom town house, it lies in a popular area close to several schools, shops and the M6 motorway network, making it ideally placed for commuting.

The property has a driveway, garage, front and rear gardens.

Contact the selling agents on 0844 8009404.



## Attractive family home has a tasteful decor and corner plot

WALSALL

£289,950

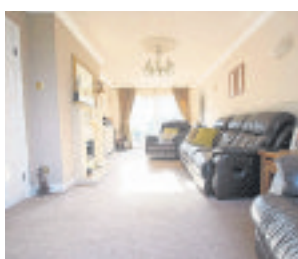
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This generous detached family home on a corner plot in Norton Lane, Walsall, comes with a detached double garage and kennels.

Deceptively spacious and beautifully presented, it is for sale through Webbs Estate Agents at £289,950, possibly available with no chain.

Its accommodation briefly comprises an entrance porch, a through hallway, a guest WC, a generous lounge, a dining kitchen, a dining room, a guest WC, three double bedrooms, an en-suite and a family bathroom. Externally there are generous gardens to three sides, two driveways and a double detached garage.

For further information, or to book that all important viewing, contact Webbs on 01543 468846.



## Detached bungalow has been extended and improved

A truly stunning detached bungalow in Nest Common, Pelsall, Walsall, has been extended and improved to the highest of standards.

It is for sale through Edwards Moore at £450,000.

Having gas central heating, double glazing, level access and full security and remote access

PELSALL

£450,000

throughout, the accommodation includes a welcoming reception hall, a superb open plan living room with a comprehensively fitted kitchen, four bedrooms, large shower room and an impressive cinema room/

gym (or bedroom with bi-folding doors).

Outside is a double garage with a utility area, very easily maintained and good-sized grounds including an in and out driveway with plentiful parking, a substantial summer house and delightful seating areas.

Contact Edwards Moore on 01922 745105.

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Official fuel consumption for the ŠKODA range in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 31.0 (9.1) to 72.4 (3.9); Extra Urban 44.1 (6.4) to 88.3 (3.2), Combined 38.2 (7.4) to 80.7 (3.5). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the ŠKODA range in mpg are 170 to 90 g/km. Standard EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.



# New Twingo offers something extra

By John Griffiths

**Vive le difference, as the French say, which may explain the reasoning behind Renault's latest sporting model.**

It's a city car which – a real rarity – comes with an agile real-wheel driving experience and peppery performance for under £14,000.

The GT is the new flagship of the Twingo range, a model which stood out at its launch because it is a rear-engined, rear wheel drive mini car, sharing the same platform which Mercedes-Benz used for its smart four.

With so many competitors in the city car class, you need to be different if you want to be noticed and the Twingo succeeds in doing that.

The Twingo is a four seater with prices starting from £9,545, and until now has been offered with either 70 or 90bhp versions of the 998cc, three cylinder Tce engine. The proven Tce technology means a small capacity, turbo charged petrol engine – the turbo offering more power than conventional four cylinder rivals but, crucially, more torque too.

The new GT gets more of both – 110bhp and an impressive 170Nm of torque from a low 2,000rpm. That means plenty of get up and go (0 to 62mph in 9.6 seconds), impressive overtaking ability and a quieter, more refined experience at cruising speeds. In essence, a true GT experience albeit in a smaller than usual package.

It's pick-up in the 50 to 70 overtaking bracket is among the best in class, with its top gear pitched on the high side for cruising economy and refinement.

Add to that the feel and agility of a rear wheel

drive car, and precise steering with maximum driver feedback, and even respectable fuel economy of 54.3mpg.

The £13,755 GT will be the ultimate Twingo – there isn't going to be a Renaultsport version like the 133bhp which topped the previous, front wheel drive range.

That's because it simply wasn't possible to tweak any more power out of the engine which sits very snugly under the rear boot floor.

That may be a disappointment to some enthusiasts, but if it doesn't have the outright performance the GT doesn't have the more extreme Renaultsport suspension and ultra low profile tyres, so its ride is softer and more refined, particularly over some of our less well-maintained rural roads.

There's also the issue of insurance costs for a car with so much appeal to the young (or indeed the young at heart).

Apart from the unique 17-inch alloys (which look good on this little car) one of the visual clues to the GT's identity is the extra air intake scoop along the rear nearside wheel, to feed more air into the engine. Not so obvious are features such as a modified turbocharger, the fuel pump, water pump and gear ratios specifically developed for the sporty Twingo, plus updated springs and anti-roll bar and a lower ride height.

The engine is mounted particularly low compared to more conventional rivals which gives more stability, and even while tackling some wet and winding roads the GT never gave any indication of being tail heavy.

RENAULT TWINGO GT, £13,755



The GT is the new flagship of the Twingo range. This impressive new Renault stands out from its competitors in the city car class.

Indeed, it's a nimble and well-balanced car and, as with all cars these days, it has an electronic stability control to help tame any wayward instincts which might occur.

The steering is, of course, power assisted but it still retains the feedback and more direct connection with the road than front wheel drive cars.

The electronic instrument display, a mix of analogic speedo and digital trip readings, is a model of clarity. The driver's seat and steering wheel have a good range of adjustment, and

headroom shouldn't be a problem for even taller drivers. Leg room in the rear is adequate (depending on the size of those in front) and at least on a par with rival city cars. The standard of materials is high, including the part-leather upholstery, giving the GT a quality feel you'd expect of a flagship model.

The test car was fitted with a number of options including the £600 Techno Pack R-Link which effectively upgrades the in-car technology to mirror that of bigger, more expensive cars. Using the central colour

touchscreen (which includes navigation and other information), it replaces the standard audio system with a reversing camera, Bluetooth, full multi-media connectivity, hands-free calls and voice control.

The Twingo GT isn't the cheapest of city cars, but retains all the advantages of that class of vehicle around town while offering something extra. Rather a lot extra, in this case, with its nippy nature, long-distance driveability and refinement, as long as the comfort and equipment of a larger car.

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### Fabulous Ford features

The new Focus and the new Fiesta are both fantastic cars. The Focus is a real driver's car, with a sporty feel and a powerful engine. The Fiesta is a real city car, with a small footprint and a peppy engine. Both cars are available in a range of colours and finishes, and both are backed by a five-year warranty.

### Hills Ford have new 66 plate Fords at the very best prices

Model	Price	Features
NEW ECOSPORT TITANIUM	£4,400	1500cc 105bhp, 17" alloys, 17" wheels, 17" tyres, 17" brakes, 17" suspension, 17" steering, 17" seats, 17" interior, 17" exterior.
NEW FIESTA TITANIUM SPORT	£1,700	1500cc 105bhp, 17" alloys, 17" wheels, 17" tyres, 17" brakes, 17" suspension, 17" steering, 17" seats, 17" interior, 17" exterior.
NEW FORD EDGE	£5,800	2500cc 150bhp, 17" alloys, 17" wheels, 17" tyres, 17" brakes, 17" suspension, 17" steering, 17" seats, 17" interior, 17" exterior.

### Brindley Hyundai Aiming high with supermini

The new Hyundai i10 is a real driver's car, with a sporty feel and a powerful engine. The i10 is a real city car, with a small footprint and a peppy engine. Both cars are available in a range of colours and finishes, and both are backed by a five-year warranty.



### Autosales Suzuki Suzuki true to principles

The new Suzuki Swift is a real driver's car, with a sporty feel and a powerful engine. The Swift is a real city car, with a small footprint and a peppy engine. Both cars are available in a range of colours and finishes, and both are backed by a five-year warranty.

Model	Price	Features
THE NEW SUZUKI RANGE FROM ONLY	£6,999	1500cc 105bhp, 17" alloys, 17" wheels, 17" tyres, 17" brakes, 17" suspension, 17" steering, 17" seats, 17" interior, 17" exterior.
SUZUKI CELERIO	£6,999	1500cc 105bhp, 17" alloys, 17" wheels, 17" tyres, 17" brakes, 17" suspension, 17" steering, 17" seats, 17" interior, 17" exterior.
SUZUKI SWIFT	£8,999	1500cc 105bhp, 17" alloys, 17" wheels, 17" tyres, 17" brakes, 17" suspension, 17" steering, 17" seats, 17" interior, 17" exterior.

### Wraps off new Citroën C3

The new Citroën C3 is a real driver's car, with a sporty feel and a powerful engine. The C3 is a real city car, with a small footprint and a peppy engine. Both cars are available in a range of colours and finishes, and both are backed by a five-year warranty.



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For competitive quotes on all your refurbishment  
needs on plastering, boarding, overboarding,  
partitions, re-skimming and artex covering.

No job too small

**07538 718264**

### HUNTER BUILD

\* Kitchen and Bathroom Specialist \* UPVC Windows and Doors

\* Fascia and Soffits \* Plastering and Tiling

\* Complete House Renovations \* Family Run Business

For quote

**07752 506695 | 0121 556 7203**

To advertise your business and reach more than 72,000 potential customers...

**1**

Call us on...  
**01543 465341**

**2**

E-mail us at...  
**sarah.winfield@expressandstar.co.uk**

**3**

Post to...  
**Sarah Jones, Walsall Chronicle,**  
**Queen Square, Cannock. WS11 1ES**



## Local Specialists



Our Specialist Section offers you a wide range of local businesses and tradesman to deal with your needs and requirements.

### Plumbing & Heating

#### N. MAYO GAS SERVICES

All Plumbing Gas Work undertaken  
Gas Safe registered

**07886 982903**  
**01922 448311**

#### Pauls Home Services LTD

Condensing Boilers  
Radiators • Upgrades  
Gas Work • Full Heating Breakdowns

Bathrooms • Cloakrooms  
• Tiling • Showers  
• Electrics • Plastering  
• Decorating • Lighting

FREE QUOTATIONS  
ALL WORK GUARANTEED

**07790 873567**  
**01922 417062**

NO CALL OUT CHARGE

### Roofing

## WALSALL ROOFING SPECIALISTS

AS RECOMMENDED ON

thebestofwalsall

- Slate and Tile Repairs
- Flat Roofs, EPDM Rubber Roofing
- uPVC Soffits and Fascias
- Chimney Reducing
- Guttering Repairs
- All Pointing Work
- Insurance Work
- 20 Year Guarantee
- Dry Ridge Systems
- 25 Years Experience
- Re-Roofs
- All genuine quotes beaten
- Special rates for senior citizens

FREE ESTIMATES

CALL MARK:  
**01922 694548 / 07790 214856**

www.walsallroofingspecialists.co.uk

## Brookes & Son ROOFING SERVICES

- ★ Discounts for OAP's
- ★ Insurance Work ★ Lead Work
- ★ Ridge Tiles Replaced
- ★ Flat Roofs ★ Pointing
- ★ Rubber Roofing (E.P.D.M.)
- ★ Chimney Repairs ★ Fascias & Gutters

25 years in the business  
FAMILY RUN - FREE QUOTES

ALL AREAS COVERED

Call: **01922 711150**  
**07722 533247**

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Flat roofing specialist

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RUBBER SYSTEMS

All work guaranteed - 35 years experience

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(Part of the Imperial Residential Group)  
Over 35 years experience

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In your time of need we'll take care of all the funeral arrangements.

- Est. 1907
- 24 hour service

#### G. Gibbs Funeral Directors

44 All Saints Way  
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Dignity

Part of Dignity plc. A British Company.

## 1 Family

elderly & disabled

WREKIN STAIRLIFTS reconditioned lifts from £799. New available. 01952 405397/07897 273617

### caravan holidays

#### DOLPHIN CARAVAN PARK.

Brean Somerset. Call 01278 751258  
www.dolphincaravanpark.co.uk

### what's on

#### QUIZ NIGHT

Portobello Methodist Church, New Street, Willenhall, WV13 3TD  
Saturday, March 18, 7pm.

Admission £3 including refreshments.

### antique fairs

#### VINTAGE ANTIQUE / Collectables

Fair, Coven Memorial Hall WV9 5DL  
Sunday 19 March 10-3. Karen 01384 277373 / 07938 123040.

#### JACKSON-HATELEY CYCLES

www.jacksonhateleycycles.co.uk

**GIGANTIC CYCLE CLEARANCE**

BOOK YOUR CYCLE NOW FOR EASTER AT SALE PRICE!

All cycles built and guaranteed with a 24 hour repair service

All spares and accessories at discount price

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Simply the best  
Ring Dave on  
**01902 782344**  
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#### caravans / motorhomes

#### We Want Your Motorhome

Finance Cleared  
Fast Secure Payment  
Top Prices Paid

Please Call  
AEG on 01384 848439 or  
Lee Jinks on 07740 895448  
www.aegmotorhomes.co.uk

#### CARAVAN FOR SALE.

North Wales. Must go, fees paid till 2018. Mint condition. Call 07590 124226.

**CARAVANS & CHALETS** For sale with seaviews. Clarach Bay near Aberystwyth from £2995 includes 2017 site fees. Call Phil on: 01970 820579. sales@clarachbay.com

**LUXURY LODGE FOR SALE!** Situated on 4\* park near Aberystwyth. In full decking, £81,950. Payment options available. Deposits from 10% (T&Cs). Call Paul 07960 944721.

**DELTA NORDSTAR** 32x12, 2 bedroom, £10,000 2017 site fee included. Please contact Mr Ayre 07809 607 535 for more details

#### 2 BERTH TOURER

Sterling Eccles Topaz SE (2013). 2 berth caravan. Excellent condition. Motor mover, solar panel, Alde heating, 2 awnings. Fully equipped. £12,999 ono. 01889 577721.

#### car boot sales

**SATURDAY BOOTSALE**  
Hilton by the Wheel Pub WY15 5SR  
Between Wolverhampton and Bridgnorth

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#### BEST WEDNESDAY BOOTSALE

10am Boat Lane, Muckley Corner, Lichfield WS14 0BU

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#### LUXURY HOLIDAY HOME

For Sale on 5\* Park, DG, CH, bar & restaurant. Child & pet friendly. 20 acres walking woodland £24,995 inc 2017 site fees Call 01568 708 326.

#### what's on

#### QUIZ NIGHT

Portobello Methodist Church, New Street, Willenhall, WV13 3TD  
Saturday, March 18, 7pm.

Admission £3 including refreshments.

#### antique fairs

#### VINTAGE ANTIQUE / Collectables

Fair, Coven Memorial Hall WV9 5DL  
Sunday 19 March 10-3. Karen 01384 277373 / 07938 123040.

#### caravans / motorhomes

#### We Want Your Motorhome

Finance Cleared  
Fast Secure Payment  
Top Prices Paid

Please Call  
AEG on 01384 848439 or  
Lee Jinks on 07740 895448  
www.aegmotorhomes.co.uk

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**DELTA NORDSTAR** 32x12, 2 bedroom, £10,000 2017 site fee included. Please contact Mr Ayre 07809 607 535 for more details

#### 6x5 Lap Panels

£16 each (inc vat)  
WS3 2BQ  
Bloxwich Fencing Ltd  
Freephone 0500 506041  
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Potting sheds, log cabins, summerhouses etc. Willenhall Rd WV1 2HA 01902 450137.

**SLABS 450mm x 450mm RIVEN**  
FACED, only £1.76 inc. VAT.  
Fenton Building Supplies: 01543 276006.

#### items for sale

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**MATTRESS**, as new, 2 months old, genuine medical reason for sale, £150. 07783 69517. No withheld numbers please. Buyer to collect.

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**ALL GOLD 9CT £300 PER OUNCE CASH PAID TODAY**  
No amount is too small  
A GENUINE LADY BUYER

All Jewellery • Watches • Costume Jewellery • Diamonds and Gold Coins • Cuckoo • Paintings • ALL SILVER • All Oriental Items

Pre-47 silver coins All war medals etc  
ANYTHING OLD & INTERESTING

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READERS ARE ADVISED to carefully consider all of their options before agreeing to the sale of any of their items.

#### kitchens & bathrooms

**SINKS, TOILETS, TRAYS**  
Large quantity of new sinks, toilets and shower trays. Buyer to collect.  
£400 ono.  
07802 487951.

#### pc's, laptops & accessories

#### CLIENT COMPUTERS

Certified technician & Microsoft partner.  
Repair & maintain laptops and PCs. In West Midlands. Virus removal, broken screens, wifi.  
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Laptops available.  
**0121 556 9481**

#### t.v. / home entertainment

#### service

**AERIAL AND TV SPECIALIST**  
Any TV Repairs, Plasma, LED etc. CCTV cameras supplied & fitted. Any area. Free Estimates. 7 days. Digital aerials, Sky installation. Wall mounts / TV setups. 07850 330251.

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"TV Link are really pleased with their response from their Classified Campaign"

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### specialists at your service

### aerials

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Steve - AA Digital Aerials

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SATELLITE & CCTV  
AERIALS FITTED FROM £75

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Servicing and Repairs  
12 Months Warranty  
All areas covered  
All quotes beaten!

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07900 578897 / 07801 748853.

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#### JR Bathrooms

Over 20 years experience in bathroom & kitchen installations.  
TILING/PLASTERING/  
FREE QUOTES

20% off throughout March!

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### building services

**DAVIES & SON BUILDERS**  
Over 35 years experience in the industry. All aspects of building work including: Extensions, loft conversions, roofing, driveways & landscaping. Discounts offered.

**01902 579592 / 07837 994465**

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#### building supplies

**RECLAIMED BRICKS**, Tiles, Slates, Oakbeams, Flooring, York Stone, Cawarden 01889 574066. sales@cawardenreclaim.co.uk

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**B & S JOINERY** Six internal pre-primed doors fully fitted from £370. 0121 532672 or 07958 526295.

**CARPENTRY AND JOINERY** Kitchens, fitted wardrobes, doors, flooring, staircases and re-furbos. 07800 234137 or 0121 4893733

### carpet fitters

**A CARPETS & VINYL** supplied or just fitted, quality samples brought to your home, no job too small. free quotes call Mark 01543 620598 / 07941 619694.

### electrical services

**ALL ELECTRICAL** work from a switch to a rewire. Insured. free quote 01902 575570 / 07958 627434.

**ALL HOME ELECTRICS** NAPIT registered. Fully insured. For a free quote call 07583 302318.

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### fencing

#### PORTWAY FENCING

SPECIAL OFFER  
10 Bays of quality fencing, concrete posts, gravel boards. £695

Heavy duty panels supplied & fitted.  
0121 531 5250 / 07866 137 656

Mon - Fri 8am - 4.30pm  
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DELIVERY AVAILABLE  
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### fitted bedrooms

**AFFORDABLE BESPOKE FITTED** Sliding Wardrobes. 07813 675526  
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### gas fitting

#### GAS SERVICES

- Boilers • Cookers
- Fires • Gas Checks
- Landlord Certificates
- Gas Leaks Traced
- Fitted, Serviced and Repaired
- Same Day Quotes
- Free Quotes

DISCOUNTS FOR OAPs

Call: **01902 366855 / 07761 973975**

**READERS ARE ADVISED**  
To check that anyone carrying out any Gas work is Gas Safe Registered.

It is an offence under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out gas work in the UK without being on the Gas Safe Register.

### gates

**ALL METAL GATES, RAILINGS**, etc. Free quotes, also repairs & fitting. 07903 500642 24 hours.

**DARLSTON FABS** 30 years exp in supplying / fitting gates and railings. Free quotes: 07497 667752.

### gardening services

**Landywood Tree & Landscaping Services**

All garden work, tree felling/lopping, pruning, hedges trimmed, turf, patios, fencing, block-paving etc.

www.landywoodlandscaping.co.uk

**01922 898 710 / 07973 177 976**

#### Garden Rite Garden Services

- Complete Landscape Service
- Patios • Fencing & sheds • Artificial Grass
- Block Paving & Gravel Drives
- FREE Estimates
- All Work Guaranteed

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#### J&B Tree Care, Landscaping & Jetwashing Services

- Trees, shrubs and hedges planted.
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- Jetwashing of your driveways, walls and brickwork, paths and patios.

**FULLY INSURED and safety conscious!**  
For a free fixed quote call:  
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A1 GUTTERING  
cleaned, repaired, replaced, facias/soffits, uPVC washdowns, all roofing/repointing work, Free quotes, 8am-6pm  
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### handyman services

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Professional family run business  
House clearances full or part, also garages, sheds etc.  
Telephone Kev  
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Full, part and single rubbish removed.  
Garage and sheds cleared.  
Leather 3 piece suites and leather chesterfields wanted.

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**ABSOLUTE BEST** cash price paid for house clearances and bereavements. Also removals undertaken. 07852 172641 / 07710 980327

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Quick, discreet and professional. 07939 421862 / 01902 410433

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### painters & decorators

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**C. I. PAINTING & DECORATING** Over 30 yrs experience City & Guilds approved. Free Quotes. 07913 732756 or 01902 650716.

**C&D DECORATING** City & Guilds / Wallpapering, Tiling and Flooring. Free quotes, call 07873 286288.

### plans prepared

**ADAM DESIGN**, Building Plans. Drawn and submitted to council. Tel: 01902 602000 / 07841 654037. Email: adamdesign@sky.com

**BUILDING PLANS** Prepared/Submitted. K. J. Bradley 01902 373248 07792 165767. www.plans4u.co.uk

### plastering

**MINT PLASTERING**  
For the very best in plastering and rendering, full rooms inc materials from 110. Halls, stairs and landings from 200

30 years experience.  
Free quotes. All work guaranteed  
**01922 606503 / 07519 694516**

**D&C PLASTERING AND RENDERING** Fast, clean, reliable service. Also building work. Free Quotes 07793 747859 or 01543 300444.

**M & S PLASTERING & BUILDING** Services. Home/Garden Improvements. Mark or Sara: 07741 770897

### plumbers

**LAURIE KENNEDY** domestic plumbing, no job too small. Insured. No call out fee: 07901 345884.

### plumbing & heating

**A RELIABLE PLUMBER** No job too small. No call out fee. Call Lee: 07713 149278 / 01902 330351.



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**PLUMBING WORK UNDERTAKEN** No job too small or large. Call Will for a free quote on: 07521 411108.

**TAD PLUMBING & HEATING** for all your plumbing needs. 30 yrs exp no call out fee. Trevor 07791 319397.

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Local  
Careful Firm  
Full or Part loads  
Call Don:  
**07749 941319**

**A DJ REMOVAL** house or one item. Affordable rates, reliable. Call: 01902 652346 or 07912 980177.

**A2B REMOVALS** Cheap and reliable removal service. Insured. 07817 842960 or 01902 744829.

**CALL DEAN NOW:** For all your Removal needs. 07429 453209/01902 830870 / 01384 940260.

**CALL PETE - MAN WITH A VAN.** Removals, clearances, large/small. 01902 701943, 07899 635852.

**KT HOUSE REMOVALS**  
12 years experience  
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS.  
LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.  
Free Quotes - Call Ric on:  
**07771 727119**

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Roofing & Scaffolding  
Rubber Roofing  
All Roofing and Scaffolding  
Work carried out.  
35 years experience  
Freephone  
**(0800) 220 - 729**

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Mini, midi skips  
Prompt delivery / collection  
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Established 26 years  
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**07966 633380**

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Mini, Midi, 6 Yard with doors and Builders.  
7 days - Prompt Service  
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Pally - Quika Skips

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**CGS TILING**  
♦ Wall & Floor Tiling  
♦ Painting & Decorating  
♦ Laminate Flooring  
♦ Clean and Reliable  
Free Quotes: 07862 297940

## upholstery

**MR B'S UPHOLSTERY**  
RE-UPHOLSTERING OF SOFAS, DINING FURNITURE, CARAVANS, CAR RETRIMS AND MORE.  
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**01543 500677 07738 851601**

**ABANDON NOT!**  
ESTABLISHED OVER 100 YEARS  
**E MARSH**  
Showroom, Elm House  
Pountney St, W'ham, WY2 4HX  
01902 712484/424296

**UPHOLSTERY SERVICES** 3pcs/springs/caravans/pubs/club/antique es. 01902 689844 / 07817 842980.

**4**  
Pets & Animals

## equestrian corner

ALL READERS are advised to check if Horses have the required Passport information.

## pets corner

**NOTICE TO READERS**  
Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:

1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with its Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree. Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

**HAND REARED BABY BUDGIE**, with cage, toys and food. £80. Telephone 07716 847443.

**YORKIE PUPPIES** 9 weeks old, Mom and Dad can be seen. £350. 07518 082265.

## GREYHOUNDS MAKE WONDERFUL PETS

All neutered, inoculated and microchipped.  
Call 01922 412212 or  
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f RGT Wolverhampton  
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## guns &amp; dogs

**NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS**  
Advertisers must ensure that they meet all necessary legal requirements for owning and using guns.

## vets

## Express &amp; Star

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COULD BE  
PROMOTING  
YOUR  
BUSINESS

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So could you by calling our friendly experienced Sales Advisors on  
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**6**

Property

accommodation to let

**J9 Accommodation**

**NO DEPOSIT**

★MOVE IN TODAY★

Studios from £90pw\*

Rooms from £65pw\*

\*Includes Most Bills  
CHECK WEBSITE FOR LIVE LIST

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**NOTICE TO READERS** It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

**FLAT SHARE** Cannonark area, furnished, bills included, laundrette, parking, employer references req. 01543 279435

**NOTICE TO READERS** Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

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**Sell your HOUSE - SIMPLE**  
You agree the price, we buy the house.

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run by women  
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We are looking for houses in your area. We will take any type of property in any condition. Call us first - highest prices paid.  
Telephone **07756 022973**  
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I pay 100% of purchase price  
Call now for the best price on your house  
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**01384 226086**  
Dewmark Homes

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Black Country Homes  
For great business results call **01902 319 191**  
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**Home Cash Buyer**  
Sell today, sign today, complete when u wish  
**£££ RENT BACK OPTIONS £££**  
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Ring Paul 24/7 Local **07870 341 089**  
Sandwell area: Call 0121 696 4154  
Walsall & Cannock area: Call 01922 432049  
Wolverhampton: Call 01902 489901  
**www.homecashbuyer.co.uk**

**CLASSIFIEDS DELIVERS RESULTS**  
"I am really pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising!"  
Paul Westwood - Home Cash Buyer  
For great business results call **01902 319 191**  
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WE BUY ANY HOUSE  
**national homeowners helpline.co.uk**  
in a mess? talk in confidence we can help  
**WE PAY MORE ANY AREA ANY CONDITION**  
24-7 **0800 085 7499**  
24-7 **0121 308 7786**

**STOP WE PAY MORE!**  
100% every time\* Free Solicitors No Fees\* Any Property\* Any Condition\*  
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We can help you make a fresh start  
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Properties & Land brought for cash  
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# Aussie rules in a game where going is tough



Practice is all important before a fixture

EVERYONE knows Wolves are the main football team in Wolverhampton. But did you know there is another football team in the city, also named after Wolves, and play in gold and black as well?

But this team doesn't play with 11 players on the pitch, or in the English football pyramid for that matter. Instead they go by the rules of Australian football, where you can pass with your fists and tackle someone off the ball.

Introducing Wolverhampton Wolverines Australian Football Club, who for the last eight years have been representing the city in the Antipodean version of the sport, which is 'rougher and tougher'.

Here they field nine players on rugby pitches where they have to score between four posts instead of two.

The team was founded in 2009 by PE teacher Ian Mitchell from Codsall and in that time the team's popularity has continually grown.

## Charity

Wolverines play in the Australian Football League Central and Northern England division, and last year came close to winning it. They are currently in pre-season and soon will host a charity shield competition in aid of Balls to Cancer, where teams from all over the country will come to the Black Country to compete.

AFL Football has been described as a mix of sports by Mitchell, as it combines styles from English football, rugby and basketball.

"It is a lot rougher than football or rugby," he said. "You are allowed to knock people out the way and tackle people off the ball to within five metres," he said. "It combines a variety of sports, there are elements of basketball, rugby and football. There are also a wide variety of strengths that are useful to have in the game."

"In midfield it helps to have tall and short players. Tall players help to catch the ball and pass it to their team at the start of the match, which is kicked off with the ball being thrown in the air. But small players are quick and able to find space to run with the ball."

There is no goalkeeper in AFL, but there are defenders, midfielders and attackers. Traditionally the

## SPORTING FEATURE

By Jamie Brassington

**"It is a lot rougher than football or rugby. There are a wide variety of strengths that are useful to have in the game"**

sport is played as 18-a-side in Australia, Ian said, but because it is a 'minority sport' here, he says it would be hard to field that many players at the moment.

He set up Wolverines following a trip to Australia in 2006, after he had finished his university education.

During his year-long journey, where he travelled with friends from Melbourne to the East Coast and West Coast, he developed a passion for the game.

"I found I wasn't enjoying playing football anymore," said Ian. "I was watching a lot in Australia and also played a bit there."

When he came back to the West Midlands, Ian joined an AFL team in Birmingham before setting up Wolverhampton Wolverines.

Since then he says there have been around 70 different players who have come through the team, with some going on to represent Great Britain at international level.

"Last season several of our senior men became European champions with the Great Britain Bulldogs and one of our girls did the same with the Great Britain Swans," said Ian. "This season several of the senior men are hoping to be selected to go down to Australia in August to represent Great Britain in the International Cup."

He said the club was now focusing on producing women's and junior teams. The club used to play their home games at Wolverhampton and Willenhall Rugby Club but now they are based at Bloxwich Rugby.

Wolverines compete in the AFL England's Central and Northern League, where they compete against Birmingham, Nottingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Huddersfield, Merseyside and Tyne Tees.



Contact is not a problem in the Aussie game



Lewis Gedney and Cameron Cope, who play for Great Britain Bulldogs, with Sophie Morris who plays for GB Vixens



Wolverhampton Wolverines practise hard on the training pitch

## Baggies heroes line up for charity clash

'SUPER' Bob Taylor, 'Big Dave' Darren Moore and 'Great Escape' hero Geoff Horsfield are among a strong Baggies line-up for a charity game in aid of Mary Stevens Hospice next month.

Former skipper Moore has been putting the Albion XI together to compete against a team of Stourbridge legends on Sunday, April 2 at the War Memorial Athletic Ground at Amblecote.

Also joining the Baggies line-up are Scotland international Nigel Quashie, Wales striker Andy Johnson, Ian Hamilton, keeper Jonathan Gould, father to Glassboys' current no 1 Matt, ex-Coventry and Blues frontman Dele Adebola, Danish shot-stopper Brian Jensen, Daryl Burgess and Paul Pechisolido.

Sponsorship opportunities for local businesses and for children to be mascots on the day are available. Call Amanda Bowen on 01384 377778.

The game will kick off at 2.30pm, with entry into the ground at £5 for adults aged 16 plus, and free for under-16s. The game will be preceded by a big family fun day from 1pm.

The debut event in April 2016 raised almost £15,000 and ended 1-1, with Bob Taylor and Damian Whitcombe on target in front of more than 2,000.

## BCT's Sandland picks up aquathlon bronze

BLACK Country triathletes contended with low temperatures, wind and rain, as well as competitive fields as the spring duathlon season in the UK got under way.

Paul Rogers travelled to Cheshire to compete in the standard distance ITU World Championship Qualifier at Oulton Park which consisted of an 8.6km run, a 38.8km bike followed by a 4.3km run. He came home in 1:57:09, 38th overall and third in the MV50 age group.

The Mallory Park Racing Circuit in Leicestershire was the venue of choice for three of the junior male BCT athletes who competed in the GoTri Duathlon consisting of a 3km run, 11km bike and a 2km run. Despite the awful conditions all put in a sterling performance with Reece Ashfield finishing fourth place in 39:21, Ollie Mason came 12th in 45:27 and Ollie Evans 24th in 50:09.

Noah Sandland, from BCT's junior section, was the only club competitor racing in the Burntwood Aquathlon, but claimed a bronze medal for his third-place finish for his age group, completing a 400m swim in 5:58, followed by a 3k run in 15:31 giving an overall race time of 21:29. The BCT Aquathlon which is on Saturday March 25 at Wombourne Leisure Centre.

## Tennis club serves up new chairman

WOLLASTON Lawn Tennis Club has signed in a new chairman.

Retired headteacher Alan Hughes has taken over the role following the club's AGM.

Hughes, who has been a playing member at the Wollaston Club for the last eight years, and has been the men's team captain for the past two seasons, takes on the role from lifetime member John Cutler.

Hughes said Cutler had been chairman through an exciting and busy period for the club. He said: "The club is in a very strong position with a hard working voluntary committee that has overseen the refurbishment of the clubhouse, four courts and a re-surfaced entrance to the premises."

"By next spring the club is hoping to have completed further substantial investment in the refurbishment of the remaining four courts with new lighting."

The Prestwood Drive club boasts excellent facilities and provides an array of competitive team tennis, social tennis for all abilities as well as excellent opportunities for junior development. Hughes added: "Membership is thriving but there is always room for people of all ages and abilities."





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## Aiton spot-on to find late Wood leveller

Brocton 1 Walsall Wood 1

AN 87th minute penalty by Drew Aiton inched Wood closer to survival but the loss of the two points left the Badgers eight points adrift of safety.

Wood had the better of the opening exchanges with both sides wary of making a mistake. A quick break out of defence on seven minutes nearly saw the Badgers go ahead, Dan Lomas was put clear wide left, his ball inside hit first time inches wide of the near post by Dominic Dell.

A catalogue of misplaced passes, mainly from Wood, followed until on 21 minutes a ball over the top of the Badgers defence by Anthony Juxon into the left of the box saw keeper Aidan Stone race from his line to save bravely at the feet of Joey Butlin.

The opening goal came seconds later, a right wing corner was put behind by Juxon at the far post but from the left wing flag kick Lomas powered home a far post header.

The last action of the half saw Aiton run at the defence left of centre only to be fouled on the edge of the D, Butlin touched the free-kick to Aiton who fired just too high.

On 54 minutes from a left wing corner the ball fell to Juxon whose first time shot was deflected the wrong side of the post. On 65, Wood's Michael Williams raced into the right of the box and swapped passes with Liam Molesworth before hitting the far angle.

Wood had a let off 10 minutes later when Jack Edwards capitalised on a defensive mistake to race into the right of the six-yard box. His cross shot beat Jenkins, bounced off the inside of the left hand post, rolled along the line and Craig Deakin cleared the danger.

Aiton levelled from the spot following a handball in the area and Wood finished on top but couldn't find the winner.

## Olympic head back with point thanks to Bannister goal

Whitby Town 1 Rushall Olympic 1

RUSHALL came away from Whitby with an Evo-Stik Premier point having been the better side for long periods.

Pics made a great start and on 20 minutes, some neat play ended with George Bowerman being played in but he placed his effort just wide from a good position.

Aaron Forde missed a great chance from Bowerman's pull-back on 66 minutes and the home side went down the other end and took the lead against the run of play, Dale Hopson bundling home.

Rushall almost hit back as Gurjit Singh seized upon some defensive hesitation but the keeper was able to grab the loose ball. But the equaliser came on 71 minutes when Craig Bannister planted home a header.

● Pics are looking to grow its thriving Youth Development Section as it continues to go from strength-to-strength.

Players are already being sought for next season, specifically in the under-12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 age groups.

Call secretary Jason Chapman on 07540 800 531 or email rofdevelopment-sec@yahoo.com

## Bloxwich dig deep to hoist cup again



Bill Pickering Cup bowls players line up

BLOXWICH held on to secure the 2017 Bill Pickering Bowls Competition in its 31st year – but Gorway proved the surprise package.

The annual event embraces the Probud clubs of Aldridge, Bloxwich, Gorway and Walsall.

Aldridge and Bloxwich made the early running, although Gorway caused a shock by winning their opening two games. They could not sustain the effort, however, and with it went the chance of recording a first Pickering Cup win.

At halfway, Bloxwich led the way with 60 points, followed by Aldridge 55 and with Gorway and Walsall 52. In the second half Aldridge and

### Bowls

Bloxwich went up a gear, with the former turning in three master cards: 12-2/12-3 and 12-3 included in a 60 point total in the run-in.

With the two favourites in the final straight, Aldridge romped in with a 12-3 win over the champions, leaving Bloxwich to score 11 points against Gorway to retain the title.

With Bloxwich holding a lead of 8-4, Gorway created history by scoring a six point maximum, the first time the feat has been achieved but Bloxwich dug deep and scored two pairs to win 12-10.

# SADDLERS NEED TO FIRE AWAY

Charlton 1 Walsall 1

THEY are a team that has come so far over the course of the 2016/17 campaign.

But if Walsall are going to make the step up from a mid-table side into one challenging for promotion – they must start winning games on the road, writes Joe Masi.

Walsall still haven't registered an away win since Boxing Day. But boss Jon Whitney felt the Saddlers' display in the opening 20 minutes at The Valley was the best they have played all season. Yet despite their dominance, they came away with just a point against a poor Addicks side.

The Saddlers ripped the hosts apart early on with Joe Edwards in particular afforded acres of space down the left flank. The former Yeovil man made them pay with a series of darting runs and dangerous crosses into the box.

### Tap

One in particular should have resulted in Walsall taking the lead after just five minutes. Edwards' whipped-in ball looked to be on a plate for Simeon Jackson to tap home just yards from goal. But, stretching, the Canada international put the ball over.

Within minutes though they were at it again – Edwards winning a corner which Jackson met only for Joe Arbo to clear off the line.

It took until the stroke of half-time for Whitney's men to finally break through.

Again it came from exploiting Charlton's high-line with Kieran Morris lofting the ball over the top and Jackson running through unopposed for a staggering 40 yards.

The striker then kept his composure to calmly fire past Declan Rudd without the outside of his right foot. But as the teams made their way off at the break, you couldn't help but feel Walsall would be made to pay for not truly making their dominance tell.

With the exception of the lively Ricky Holmes, Charlton had offered very little going forward.

But Addicks boss Karl Robinson sent out his charges to ensure the second half was more scrappy, halting Walsall's momentum. And it paid off as Tony Watt fired home.



Simeon Jackson gets the better of the defender to fire home for Walsall at The Valley

## Crusade up the league continues

**Bloxwich 52 Church Stretton 7**  
THE Bloxwich crusade up the league continued with another convincing victory.

Without 12 squad members this win is testament to the level of progress made by both the players and coach.

The visitors were exposed by the power of Bloxwich in the first few minutes, when Adam

Bowater crossed the line. Sean Bottomer converted to give Bloxwich a 7-0 lead. Gareth McLean scored the next try, again converted by Bottomer.

Two further tries were added in the first half, courtesy of skipper Richard Geary and returning veteran Tez Greenwood.

Yet again Bottomer parted the uprights on both occasions to

make the half-time score 28-0. Bottomer had clear run to the corner for a try and Bloxwich added three more, the pick being Richard Geary's nailing of an interception for a 50-yard return. Other Bloxwich try scorers were Bottomer and Maclean.

There was some salvation for Church Stretton when they crafted a fine try of their own.

## Emphatic win over useful visiting team

Walsall 53 Tamworth 17

WALSALL, for the second successive week, displayed some superb rugby skills in another emphatic win, this time against a useful Tamworth team.

Walsall again played their best rugby in the first half and secured their try bonus just before half time.

The visitors produced the best rugby during the opening spells and Stephen White crashed over.

Walsall's first score came from a Roger Weston 30m penalty kick before the first, and possibly best try, of the day, through Ethan Walker.

Jeffrey Williamson broke through from 20m for a touch down and Pete Fitzgerald scored the third try, with Weston adding a hat-trick of conversions. The final score of the half came from Jamie Hickman.

The early period of the second half saw both teams losing players to the sinbin.

Tamworth showed a very positive attitude and put together some good attacks. They were rewarded with a try for winger Cuckrowski.

A Weston penalty gave the hosts another three points and Walker intercepted to run 80m for another try, Weston converting.

The visitors continued to press and were rewarded when No8 Lawrence burst through for a try from 20m with Jackson adding the extras.

But the hosts secured the final scores. Dave Merlin went over for a try and Andy Richardson notched his first score, both converted by Weston.

The United had a pleasing victory over Dudley Kingswinford, running in six tries in a 36-9 win.

The 3rd XV were involved in a close contest with Cannock 2nds at Delves Road. The visitors held on to win the league encounter 31-26.

Walsall Colts beat Stoke 23-16 to reach the county cup semi-final.

## Academy girls claim futsal championship

SHIRE Oak Academy's u-14 girls futsal team are Black Country champions.

After earning the right to represent Walsall schools, the girls then overcame six teams from across the Black Country. After topping their group, they beat Oldbury in a semi-final and West Walsall Academy 1-0 in the final.

They scored 19 goals and conceded three. Players were Millie Rogers, Ellie Leavesley, Annie Wallace, Erin Waddilove, Abby Gray, Brooke Foxall and Katie Beech. Teacher Claire Cresswell said they were excellent ambassadors.

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The Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketter, Bedford.  
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